Contents

Day 1
Day 2
Day 3
Day 4
Day 5
Day 6
Afterword

Annex B, C & D (telegram & notes verbale)
Appendix 2
Appendix 3
Appendices 7 & 8
Appendix 9
Appendices 10 & 11
Appendix 13

Memos, letters etc re official history

Issue copy

CONFIDENTIAL COVERING SECRET

THE ATTACK ON THE IRANIAN EMBASSY, LONDON

30 April - 5 May 1980

Introduction	paras 1 - 9
DAY 1 (Wednesday 30 April)	paras 10 - 28
DAY 2 (Thursday 1 May)	paras 29 - 52
DAY 3 (Friday 2 May)	paras 53 - 65
DAY 4 (Saturday 3 May)	paras 66 - 80
DAY 5 (Sunday 4 May)	paras 81 - 96
DAY 6 (Monday 5 May)	paras 97 - 125
Afterward	paras 126 - 134

Annexes

ANNEX A	Text of the demands made by the "Group of the Martyr" on 30 April
ANNEX B (Confidential)	FCO telegram of 30 April: message from the Prime Minister to President Bani Sadr
ANNEX C	Note Verbale of 30 April from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
ANNEX D	Note Verbale of 5 May from the FCO
ANNEX E (Secret)	Rules of Engagement for troops operating in support of the police against terrorists
ANNEX F	Extract from Hansard 1 May 1980. Cols 1628 - 1629

Appendices

(Confidential)	
APPENDIX 2	Note on Khuzistan (Arabistan) prepared by the FCO
APPENDIX 3 (Confidential)	Note on the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents; and the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (prepared by the FCO on 2 May)
APPENDIX 4 (Confidential)	Note by FCO on action taken in COBR to dealwith the terrorist demand for three Arab Ambassadors and related matters.

CONFIDENTIAL COVERING SECRET

DIX 5

me Office only)

APPENDIX 6

(Secret)

(Circulation within

Home Office only)

APPENDIX 7	Statement issued by the FCO at the conclusion of the siege
APPENDIX 8	Message from President Beni Sadr to the Prime Minister - 5 May
APPENDIX 9	Extract from Hansard of 6 May (Cols 28 - 35)
APPENDIX 10	Photograph of the Embassy
APPENDIX 11	Map of the surrounding area
APPENDIX 12	Plan of the Interior of the Embassy
APPENDIX 13	RESUMED INQUEST ON THE FIVE TERRORISTS 3/4 FEBRUARY 1981

Police Department

HOME OFFICE

January 1981

10. None of this was known, however, at 11.26 on 30 April when the Embassy alarm was activated at New Scotland Yard. A minute later the Information Room alerted units of the Diplomatic Protection Group. Four armed motorcyclists were in the area and they arrived at Princes Gate at 11.29. By 11.31 two sergeants and 7 constables of the DPG were present. At that stage all that was known was that 2 or 3 armed men had taken hostages in the Embassy, including a policeman. The Home Office was informed that hostages had been taken but it was not yet clear whether this was something for the police to resolve by themselves or whether the Cabinet Office Briefing Room would have to be operated. Nevertheless, steps were taken to alert those who might be wanted. Some Home Office officials were hosting a conference on terrorism and the media in London; others were

Other officials with responsibilities in the counter-terrorist field were attending the closing stages of a seminar on defence matters in Plymouth. In view of the possibility of reprisals against our Embassy in Tehran the Foreign and Commonwealth Office were informed and they sent a flash telegram to Tehran telling them what had happened and warning them to take all necessary precautions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran was to be told of Lord Carrington's personal concern and his determination to ensure that the incident was resolved speedily and, as far as possible, without casualties. Kuweit and Abu Dhabi were asked to pass the message on to the Iranian Foreign Minister who was travelling in those parts.

11. The first exchanges with the terrorists were carried out by Chief Supt Bromley of the DPG who also happened to be in the neighbourhood. This was about 11.45. Pamphlets in Farsi were pushed out of the window of the Embassy and one of the gunmen shouted out the gist of the demands in English. He said that they were the Group of the Martyr and that they demanded the release of 91 prisoners held in Iran, recognition of the nationa rights of Iranians and a plane to take the group and the hostages out of England once the prisoners had been released. He said that the hostages would be killed if these demands were not met within 24 hours and that the group would blow up the Embassy if there was any police interference. were told of the incident by the police at

12.15 and they told at 12.35. In view of the nature of the demands, preparations were made for the Cabinet Office Briefing Room to be opened at 1500 hours.

12. At Princes Gate there was a rapid police build-up and Deputy Assistant Commissioner Dellow took command at 12.00. He authorised a reconnaisance to the front and rear and the establishment of a tight inner cordon of armed police officers. An Arabic speaking police officer was called. PC Lock's presence among the hostages was confirmed but his radio could not be found.

13. Between 13.00 and 14.00 the build-up at the scene continued. Mr Dellow asked for the Embassy telephone lines to be cut at 12.59 and this request was passed to the Post Office by the Home Office at 13.18, the aim being to force the terrorists to communicate directly with the police and ensure their isolation from the outside world. The police operation was being run from a control vehicle at the scene (a coach with conference facilities), and Mr Dellow held his first meeting there with DAC Peter Nievens (Information), Commander Dovey (Protection); Commander Cracknell (A District); Chief Supt Robins (D 11)(weapons); and Chief Supt Clark (local police division). Armed officers from D11 supplemented the police cordon and observation points were set up which produced a sighting report shortly after 13.00 of an armed man wearing an Arab style headdress.

14.

SECRET

15. At 13.41 Ch Supt Luff joined Ch Supt Bromely and some simple and unstructured negotiations were begun with the terrorists, the aim being to find out as much as possible about them and their hostages. It was established that Kramer and Harris were among them. A Home Office official arrived at the scene at 14.06. He and the two others who succeeded him on a shift basis remained at the scene throughout the incident in order to liaise with COBR. They acted as the primary regular channel of communication between the scene and COBR, passing to the police commander the comments suggestions and questions of COBR and providing in return information about events at the scene as they happened and the tactics that were being discussed. They also acted as the channel for any requests to COBR for assistance or information.

16. At 1403 the terrorists made an emergency telephone call to ask for a female doctor to attend a hostage who had been injured, they said, in a fall. This, it later emerged, was the Iranian Charge d'Affaires, Ali Afrouz, who had made an unsuccessful attempt to escape in the early stages of the incident by jumping out of a window. The police decided that no doctor could be allowed to enter the Embassy, but the request was taken up by the negotiators and a police surgeon was offered, with the stipulation that treatment should be carried out at the entrance to the Embassy. Alternatively, it was suggested, they could release the sick hostage. The terrorists did not respond to either alternative. At 14.35 Mr Dellow ordered a contingency plan to be drawn up in case it became necessary for the police to enter the Embassy by force.

17. The police command moved to the Royal School of Needlework (25 Princes Gate) at about 14.30. This did not prove suitable on a long term basis, partly because of the quality and quantity of the exhibits on the walls, and the control moved to a nursery school at 24 Princes Gate at about 14.00 on the following day, 1 May.

From an early stage the police had to cope with world wide press interest (handled by DAC Nievens from a press point near the Queens Gate entrance to Hyde Park), and their lives were made more complicated by a demonstration of pro-Khomeini Iranian students near the scene. Resources had to be found to cope with this as well as with the siege itself. The demonstration lasted throughout the siege numbering as many as 200-300 people at its peak and it attracted trouble from counter-demonstrators. There was a threat that the Iranians might seek to get to the Embassy by breaking thr-ough the police cordon and their way had to be blockaded with vehicles.

18. The Cabinet Office Briefing Room opened at 15.00. At 15.03 the hostage Karkouti telephoned the BBC and restated the terrorists' demands, stressing that the terrorists were Iranians, and that the 24 hour deadline expired at 11.00 on 1 May. The demands themselves had been handed to the police in the form of a note typed in poor English headed 'Group of the Martyr Muhi Eideen Al Nassir' together with a handwritten list in Arabic of 92 names (see Annex A for the text of the note and the transliterated list of names).

A Reuters report from Iran timed at 1529 showed that Tehran had come to a similar conclusion. A Foreign Ministry spokesman Nassir-e-Sadat Salahi accused Iraqi agents of taking over the Embassy and said that Iranians had been warned to expect such actions after pro-Iraqi gunmen tried to assassinate the Iranian

Charge D'Affaires in Beirut 10 days earlier.

19. The consensus in COBR at that time was that the incident should if possible be brought to a peaceful conclusion by talking the terrorists out.

In the meantime, a brief statement had been prepared for the Home Secretary to make to the House confirming that hostages had been taken at the Embassy and saying that all appropriate steps were being taken. A press statement was issued during the evening.

20. As regards the Iranian authorities, the FCO felt that they should be made aware of the gunmen's demands but that it was important to avoid giving Tehran the impression that we were putting pressure on them. The instruction which accompanied the text of the demands to Tehran was that it was not at present appropriate to consult the Iranian authorities as to how they would like us to respond and that we would not wish them to suspect that we would intend to give way. However, if the Iranians had any suggestions to offer, they should be passed back to London.

21. By 15.54 negotiations were being carried out at the scene by trained negotiators from C13 through an interpreter. The terrorists were still demanding the presence of a female doctor and had asked for 52 meals to be sent in. The assessment was that they were 'rather twitchy'. A CBS reporter had managed to get through to the Embassy and the terrorists said that their aim was to work on the Iranian Government through the British. If this proved unsuccessful, they would kill the hostages and blow up the Embassy after 24 hours. It was difficult to know how much credence to give to this threat since no explosives had so far been seen. A message was passed from COBR to the scene asking the police whether there was any evidence of explosives. All that

was known of the terrorists' weaponry at that stage was that they were thought to have a machine pistol, a handgun and possibly a shotgun.

22. At 16.20 a hostage was released. This proved to be Freidoun Mozafarian who was taken to St Stephens Hospital in an hysterical condition.

The police were operating on the assumption that there would be no capitulation to the terrorists' demands and no safe conduct out of the country.

23. The Home Secretary arrived in COBR at 17.45 and was brought up to date. In order to counter any reprisals against our Embassy in Tehran, the FCO reported that we had requested extra protection from the Iranian authorities.

The meeting agreed this move although there was obviously a risk that it might become known to the press, and therefore to the terrorists. It was known that at least one of them spoke broken English and they seemed to be listening to radio reports.

24. There was a good deal of diplomatic activity in the course of the evening and night. The FCO sent to Tehran a message from the Prime Minister to be delivered to President Beni Sadr in which Mrs Thatcher expressed her deep personal concern and said that the intrusion into the Embassy constituted an act of terrorism and an infringement of the immunity of diplomatic staff which the British Government found totally repugnant (see Annex B). The Iranians were asked not to give any publicity to the message in case news of it got back to the terrorists.

25. Meanwhile, in London a group of 50 pro-Khomeini students, shouting slogans and waving clenched fists, marched towards Princes Gate and handed a petition to police officers in which they offered to substitute themselves for the hostages. An MP was reported by Reuters to have called on the Foreign Secretary 'not to countenance flying in the prisoners unless they are accompanied by the American hostages'. This report was not substantiated but it gave rise to some adverse foreign comment later, especially in Tehran.

26. During the course of the evening the Iranian Consul General and a consular official came to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and provided details of the building and its access points. They handed over the keys and a Note Verbale which asked the Foreign Secretary to take all possible measures to safeguard the lives of the hostages (Annex C). This was taken as to constitute permission for entry to be made to the Embassy premises if necessary but th matter was put beyond doubt on 5 May when the FCO sent a reply saying that this was ho they understood it (Annex D).

28. The assessment from the scene at 22.30 was that the terrorists appeared calm and could probably remain so for 3 or 4 days. Although they had asked for food they had allowed none in and probably had some in the building. The had still not allowed a land-line in. In talking to the negotiators they had not appeared to take their demands too seriously and

This was put to the Prime Minister when she arrived for a briefing at 23.30.

and this appeared to confirm that the Iraqis were the moving force behind the attack. They would of course deny any involvement, and the group itself had taken pains to stress that they were Iranians. There was still no firm information about explosives and it was thought that, although they were a tough group, they probably had some regard for their own lives, despite their stated willingness to die. The terrorists seemed to be preparing to settle down for the night, none of the hostages was seriously injured and the rumours of a death in the Embassy had not been confirmed. However the Prime Minister noted that injuries or hysteria could lead to a sudden deterioration during the night and it was agreed that DAC Dellow should be given delegated authority to commit the military if an emergency arose and there was no time to consult the Home Secretary.

SECRET

DAY 2; THURSDAY 1 MAY 1980

29. The night passed without incident. Lights were seen on the fourth and sixth floors.

Some of the latter were awake too and movement was seen at one of the third floor windows shortly after 0500.

30. To the consternation of the police and COBR a phone call was made from the Embassy to the BBC at 0702, thus revealing that the terrorists' lines of communication with the outside world had not all been cut as the police had requested.

The police were also concerned to effect the evacuation of the surrounding area because of the possible presence of explosives. An added reason for evacuating the Ethiopian Embassy at 17 Princes Gate was that

Getting the cooperation of the Ethiopians did not prove entirely easy.

31. The 0800 news bulletin carried a statement read by the hostage Karko ti,

'The Group occupying the Iranian Embassy' said Karkouti 'would like to assure the British public opinion (sic) that the British hostages, as well as all other non-Iranian hostages, will not be harmed. They would demonstrate that in a later stage. But the deadline for the safety of the other hostages and the others as well - which is twelve o'clock noon - is still valid. That is all.' The BBC man who took the call managed to slip in a few

questions about conditions in the Embassy and the terrorists' spokesman, later identified as Salim, came on the line. It transpired that the terrorists had actually spoken directly to the Iranian Foreign Minister during the night. As Qotbzadeh explained later in the day during a press conference in Abu Dhabi, 'They called me by phone and put their demands. I said we can have no blackmail and I cut the phone.' Salim commented 'I think he will regret this statement.' Obviously upset by Qotbzadeh's reaction he contradicted his carefully reassuring statement about the safety of the hostages and said that after the deadline he would kill them all because 'he don't care for the Iranian hostages.' Nevertheless when pressed, he repeated that the British hostages would be alright.

32. This was the last occasion on which the terrorists were able to communicate directly with the media. The remaining lines to the Embassy were located and cut by 0900 and the police succeeded in establishing a landline

SECRET

By the morning of 1 May the terrorists already knew that the Iranian government would not budge. Nevertheless they used the landline intermittently during the morning to talk to the police, stressing that no harm was intended to the four British hostages and asking for medical help for the hostage Kramer who was suffering from stomach trouble. Lomotil pills were sent in. The police assessment of the terrorists was that they were articulate, firm and self-confident,

36. While this was being discussed in COBR, the police arrested 3 Iranian students near the Albert Hall in possession of materials which could be used for making petrol bombs; news came from Tehran that the British secretary of an Anglican Bishop had been shot and wounded; and in Paris two men, thought at first to be of Arab

extraction but proving to be a father of Irish extraction born in Casablanca and his son, approached the British Embassy with the spurious claim that they knew the terrorists and might be able to help. Unexpectedly, at 1125, Kramer was released by the terrorists, apparently still suffering from stomach pain. He was taken away for medical help and debriefing, and to keep him out of the way of the press for as long as possible. Ten minutes later the police log mentioned a report that a shot had been heard from the Embassy. /The hostages later told the press that a shot had in fact been fired much earlier in the morning. One of the terrorists ordered Afrouz, the Charge D'Affaires, to move from one side of the room to the other. When he was a bit slow in obeying the man pointed his gun at him and put a shot into the ceiling. This would have suggested to the police, had they known of it, that the gunmen were perhaps not all as calm and unruffled as they seemed; and that of the different groups of hostages, there was less chance of a cordial and potentially life-saving relationship building up between the gunmen and those diplomats who were closely identified with the Khomeini regime./7

37.

They were worried by the fact that their power of independent communication had been cut off and they talked about getting a message transmitted. 'We are giving the Iranian government two more hours until 2pm today' they said 'If the Iranian government will acknowledge that they are negotiating with the British government, that will extend the time. This is not a sign of weakness but our humanitarian duty. After 2 o'clock all responsibility falls on the Iranian government.' This revealed again the concern to justify themselves before public opinion which had been a feature of the terrorists' earlier statements. They got very upset at 1317 when LBC quoted a completely inaccurate report that they had threatened to kill 2 hostages every two hours and LBC had to be persuaded of the irresponsibility of this kind of comment. They broadcast a retraction later and the gunmen were satisfied.

SECRET

38. It was not clear whether the announcement of the extended deadline was the message which the gunmen wanted to have broadcast or whether something else was to follow.

An example of the relationship between the media and crowd behaviour was another LBC report at 1500 (again erroneous) that the British embassy in Tehran had been occupied. This seems to have provoked the scuffling between Iranian demonstrators and police near the Albert Hall during which one PC got his leg broken.

39. At 1309 the terrorists' spokesman Salim got in touch with the negotiators and said that he wanted to send a telex direct to Tehran.

In the event the message was passed much later in the afternoon through diplomatic channels.

SECRET

SECRET

40. The 1400 deadline passed uneventfully. At 1430 Salim said that it would be extended until 1630 if the telephone and telex were reconnected. If they were not, the responsibility would lie with the police. At 1508 he asked for 25 hamburgers. at 1539 he gave a 15 minute deadline for their arrival

41. Before this became available, however, Salim spoke to the negotiator again at 1645 with another set of demands which, he said, were final. If they were not met by 7pm., all the hostages would be killed. They now wanted an aircraft to fly them and their Iranian hostages to the Middle East. The crew was to consist mainly of females and a coach with curtained windows was to take the terrorists and all the hostages to the airport, where the British ones would be released. The Ambassadors of Iraq, Algeria and Jordan were to be waiting at the airport. This was the first indication that the terrorists had, to all intents and purposes, given up any attempt to persuade the Iranian government to agree to release the prisoners in Khuzestan. Their priority was now a safe conduct out of the country. The police negotiated an immediate extension of the deadline to 2000 while the new demands were considered.

SECRET

42. Perhaps Salim had not quite given up all hope of influencing the Iranian government. At any event, the promised message for transmission to Tehran was received in COBR at 1845 and proved to emanate from the hostages themselves who appeared to be displaying a certain degree of support, whether genuine or not, for the terrorists' political aims. It read as follows:

> This should reach Iran from all of the hostages at 16 Princes Gate, dictated by the Second Secretary, Iranian Embassy.
>
> In order that world imperialism, meaning the US and all its supporters, do not benefit from the act of holding these hostages by a number of our Iranian/Arab brothers attached to the martyr group of Muhieddin al Nassir, and lest they have a chance to take another step against weak nations. Therefore all of us who have signed this letter wish to represent our request to the Revolutionary Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran as follows, hoping that they will immediately investigate our request and announce a positive result.
>
> 1. We wish them to investigate and take necessary action regarding the requests of our brothers, the members of the Group of the Martyr Muhieddin al Nassir.
>
> 2. The request of our brothers is particularly to stress the point of our disagreement over the basic nature of independence, which is both lawful and reasonable, and is definitely worthy of investigation.
>
> 3. Not only have we no hostility towards them but they have been very fair in the majority of affairs and we are well aware of their humanitarian attitude.
>
> 4. In the name of Mighty God, in whom we all believe, in order to achieve this goal we will do our best and in our efforts we expect speedy cooperation and assistance from the officials of our beloved government.
>
> From all the hostages and dictated by Mr Naghizadeh, Second Secretary of the Iranian Embassy, London.

43.

SECRET

SECRET

44.

45.

What was to be the role of the Ambassadors?

46. This last was the crucial question and the one on which the attempt to obtain a negotiated end to the siege ultimately foundered. The gunmen, it transpired, wanted the Ambassadors present to guarantee their safety and none of those approached

was willing to become involved unless he could give this guarantee. Any thought that we might be prepared to provide a plane, if only for the terrorists and not their hostages, foundered on the fact that we were signatories to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons including Diplomatic Agents. This obliged us either to extradite the perpetrators of a terrorist offence against diplomats, or to deal with them under our own law (see Appendix 3 for a note on the Convention).

Although considerable efforts were made over the succeeding days to provide an ambassadorial presence, this did not in the end prove possible. Unfortunately, this was the demand on which the terrorists focused and from which they would not be moved. It was the frustration arising from this impasse which eventually drove them to kill on 6 May.

47.

SECRET

48.

The terrorists' own frustration was revealed when PC Lock appeared at the window of the Embassy at 2134 and said that the situation had worsened because of 'lack of cooperation by the police.' The terrorists, he said, wanted an open telephone line and a coach to Heathrow (this was the first mention of Heathrow). They had said that they did not trust the police and that his life was in danger if the police tried anything. They had set a new deadline of 0800 tomorrow but were definitely edgy and had wanted to throw the field telephone out of the window.

SECRET

At 2225 PC Lock appeared at the window again and said that he had been told to ask for the production at the front door within one hour of a BBC man known to the hostage Sim Harris. He gave some BBC phone numbers and said that the hostages had been told that this was to be their last night.

49. The choice at this point was between doing something to publicise the new set of demands fairly soon, in the hope of calming the situation, or agreeing to produce the BBC man the next day.

At 0048 it was reported from the scene that the terrorists now appeared firm and not hysterical. They had repeated the 0800 deadline but had also asked the police to get in contact with them again at that time.

50. International interest in the siege had grown during the day. At the UN the Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, condemned the seizure of the Embassy as an act of terrorism and appealed for restraint and the safe release of the hostages. This, he said, was yet another regrettable incident involving the illegal seizure of diplomatic premises and the holding of hostages in clear violation of long-standing international conventions affirming the inviolability of such premises and personnel. The Iraqi News Agency in Beirut reported a claim from three hitherto obscure groups that they were responsible for the London operation. They were the Political Organisation of the Arab People, the Arab Masses Movement and the Moslem Arab People Strugglers Movement. The Agency also carried a statement from Baghdad which suggested official sympathy for the operation and said that it was time to aim a knock-out blow

SECRET

at what it described as the 'Persian racists' who were occupying Iran's oil-producing province of Khuzestan. In Abu Dhabi Qotbzadeh abused the Iraqi government, calling it an agent of American imperialism and Zionism. 'Iran' he said, 'will not give in to blackmail either from the super powers or a small number of terrorists.' He said that he saw no irony in Iranians being held hostage in view of the American diplomats being held in Tehran. 'The occupation in Tehran is in reaction to 25 years of oppression and killings in Iran' he said, 'We condemn the occupation of our Embassy which is totally in a foreign land of foreign people and has nothing to do with the issue (sic).' He went on to say the the Iranian government had given the British government full authorisation to act in whatever way it considered best to end the issue of the hostages.

51.

Unfortunately this advice did not noticeably affect the style and content of a May Day speech in Isfahan in which the President, Mr Bani Sadr, said that the Iranians were prepared to accept the martyrdom of their children in England. The only useful statement to come out of Tehran was from the Foreign Ministry spokesman Dr Salahi in which he referred to threats which had been made to occupy the British Embassy in Tehran. He had received information, he said, that certain people were planning to occupy the Embassy and he warned the militant citizens of Tehran that these provocations and plots were the work of 'the world-devouring USA and the traitorous Baathist regime of Iraq' who were trying to step up their propaganda campaign against Iran and exploit the situation. He urged all Iranians to keep calm and be alert for counter-revoluntionary provocation. The Ambassador had in fact closed the Embassy for the day following a

SECRET

telephone threat to blow it up. Reuters reported increased security round the compound including jeep patrols and a dozen police with automatic rifles manning the main gates. A misinterpretation of this activity seems to have been the source of the earlier report that the Embassy had been occupied. Later in the day Tehran radio adopted an openly hostile tone, fed partly by reports from Agence France Presse and TASS that the gunmen were demanding the exchange of the American hostages. This seems to have arisen from the alleged demand on the previous day from an unnamed MP that such an exchange should be made. Tehran radio drew from this the conclusion that the whole incident was being master-minded by British Intelligence and the CIA. They also took exception to the tone of Mrs Thatcher's note to Mr Bani Sadr which they regarded as an attempt to teach the Iranians a lesson about diplomatic immunity. They ended with the pious hope that 'God willing, the mother of democracy will die in giving birth to this latest child' (ie the plot to occupy the Embassy).

52.

SECRET

DAY 3: FRIDAY 2 MAY 1980

53. Unlike the previous night the terrorists and hostages did not settle down very readily.

PC Lock said that morale was quite high and that everyone, including the Chargé, acknowledged that they were being well treated. The police concluded from this that the ~~hoped for~~ togetherness of captors and hostages was beginning to appear and that the terrorists would now settle for the night, with considerable expectations for the morning.

54.

56. Meanwhile the Iranians began to apply pressure in another quarter. Tehran Radio had reported that the students demonstrating outside the Embassy were being badly treated and were being denied food and blankets despite the bitterly cold weather. The President's Press Officer enquired about this and Sir John Graham rang through at 0650 to check the position. He was told that the students were being contained within a cordon and that they were being allowed to leave to get food and water but were not then being allowed back. All was apparently quiet in Tehran but during the course of the day there was an exchange of telegrams between Sir John Graham and Lord Carrington in which it was decided to recall Sir John and reduce the staff at our Embassy to the absolute minimum because of the threats which had been made against the Embassy. The fact that there had already been violent clashes in London between the police and pro-Khomeini supporters and the uncertain outcome of the siege, which could be turned to our disadvantage whatever it was, made this the prudent course.

57. Negotiations with Salim began unhopefully at 0810 when he put the phone down saying: 'Now we are going to kill the hostages. We have given you enough time since Wednesday and you didn't do anthing.'

SECRET

Salim

confirmed that they had now dropped the demand for the release of the 91 prisoners in Khuzestan and now wanted only an aircraft to get them out of the country. The heightened tension within the Embassy was picked up through one of the devices which recorded a woman screaming and saying 'don't drag me.'

58. The BBC man who arrived at the scene shortly after 0900 was Tony Crabb, the Managing Editor of BBC Television News.

59. Crabb later described how he went forward with the negotiator to the front of the Embassy where the negotiator called out for Salim:

> There was movement at the ground floor window to the right of the front door. The heavy curtains which were drawn across the window moved and somebody looked out through the crack in the curtains. I couldn't tell who that was. Then the curtains were parted by, I think, the man who was eventually to act as interpreter. I would describe the man as an Arab, approximately mid-forties and of medium height. I think it was he who then opened the sash type window about 2-3 feet to allow us to talk. Sim Harris then came forward to the window and I was aware of another man further back behind in the room. This man was Arab in his twenties, small (possibly 5'3") and small build. He had in front of him what I thought was an automatic weapon. It certainly wasn't a rifle or hand gun. Sim then spoke to me. He said 'you've got to get it over to the Government how the police are acting. They've cut off the phones and telex so the Iranians can't communicate. There were two statements yesterday about mediation.' I said 'what was the mediation proposal?' Sim and the man acting as an interpreter explained that this was a request for the Algerian, Jordanian and Iraqi Ambassadors, together with a representative of the Red Cross to mediate. The Ambassadors would go in the plane with the Iranian hostages leaving the non-Iranians at the airport. Sim said 'I honestly believe these people are sincere. They are not stupid. They are highly intelligent university educated. The tension had built up too high. They wanted to drop the tension. We had formed very good relationships with our captors but the police are determined to upset things by opening doubts.' During a quiet period last night they had heard sounds like drilling. This disturbed them. This morning one of the hostages (an Iranian) was told by the group that if the police did not cooperate they would shoot him. At this the hostage suffered what appeared to be a mild heart attack... PC Lock came to the window and explained that the hostage had apparently had a nervous convulsion and that he had a heart condition... Sim came back to the window and said that he quite understood that the policy of the police was non-violent, but they were showing psychological agression.... The

interpreter said that the cultural attaché wanted to say something to us. He came forward to the centre of the window. He was a round faced man, thinning hair, thick set, middle aged, with a large bruise under his right eye. He said 'they are our brothers. We are all Moslems.'

60. This was the first indication that the Ambassadors were wanted to 'mediate' and that they were to accompany the terrorists out of the country. This did seem to confirm that the terrorists were now thinking more of their skins than of their cause although the fact that they later continued to press for publicity left the role of the Ambassadors in doubt. (Tehran radio got it wrong in thinking that the Ambassadors were wanted to mediate with the Iranian Government). The FCO decided to warn the Ambassadors that they had been mentioned by the terrorists.

61. The negotiator got back in touch with Salim as soon as Crabb had left the scene and began to talk about food. The terrorists asked for proof that their demands were being taken seriously, referring to the (London) Arabic Press and Kuweiti newspapers, and asked again for the phone to be reconnected. The interpreter began a conversation in Farsi with Salim about the possible release of a British hostage or a woman, but Salim was adamant that no-one would be released before the airport. 'Our peaceful attitude is diminishing' he said. 'We want this plan (ie the aircraft) by 5 or 6 o'clock.' Meanwhile he asked for food for 33 people between noon and 4 o'clock and some canned drinks such as Pepsi. The police agreed to this

The Press, however, had discussed the existence and operation of COBR following an interview given by the former Home Secretary Merlyn Rees, and the Guardian had carried a report that the SAS were 'waiting in the wings.'

The Prime Minister endorsed this policy at a meeting with the Home Secretary at 14.45. The Home Secretary undertook to keep the Prime Minister informed of developments. If major decisions had to be taken he would consult her if there was time, but in an extreme emergency he would have to authorise whatever action was necessary. Once the decision to mount an attack on the Embassy was taken it would be important to let the SAS decide how it was to be done. The Prime Minister agreed with this and said that, if an assault became necessary, it was doubly important, following the failure of the American attempt to resuce their hostages in Tehran, that we should be successful.

63. The terrorists seemed to enjoy their lunch and the tempo of negotiations slowed during the afternoon with advice being given on the treatment of the hostage with the heart condition and a pair of trousers being requested by the terrorists for one of the women hostages. They confirmed that they wanted the Ambassadors to come to the Embassy rather than to the airport but the deadline passed without incident. Salim did however reveal that the possibility of an assault on the Embassy was not far from their minds.

Speaking through the interpreter, Salim said that all they wanted was to meet the Ambassadors, get a plane and settle this peacefully be letting the hostages free. He went on to warn the police not to prolong the negotiations or take action against the Embassy 'because we can kill the hostages no matter how quick you think you are. We have no intention of staying here two or three months. We will decide to finish this one day.' Salim then harked back to the earlier request for a telex line but he was not prepared to release any hostages in return.

SECRET

64. The day's negotiations ended on a calm note with Salim accepting some cigarettes. Things looked fairly encouraging from COBR's point of view. The Khomeini supporters who had created such noise and confusion outside the Embassy began to leave after their Consul-General, Dr Seyf Ehdie, told them that their Prime Minister wished them to disperse. He told the press that the British Government had brought pressure to bear on the Iranian government.

65. It was always envisaged that this situation would be reached eventually, but its timing was crucial. Neither at the scene or in COBR did it seem that the right moment had yet come.

There was some ambiguity about which Ambassadors would be acceptable to the terrorists since as well as the Iraqi, Jordanian and Algerian, the Chargé had mentioned the Syrian or the Libyan and in response to a suggestion from the negotiators Salim had not ruled out the Kuweiti or the Bahraini. The Libyan was not acceptable to us, and the others asked for time to consult their governments

The amount of time that this took could not have been forseen and the difficulties did not seem insurmountable as the terrorists settled down to sleep on 2 May. The only cloud on the horizon was a telegram from Amman which recorded that the Jordanians had reversed their provisionally helpful attitude of earlier in the day and had told their Chargé that he was not authorised to respond to our request. The Jordanian Prime Minister was apologetic but said that Jordan had a long-standing, firm and publicly stated policy of not conducting any form of dialogue or negotiations with terrorists and that this principle would, he feared, be undermined if they were to get involved. He suggested that the Arab League representative might be better, or the Algerian Ambassador whose government was 'closer to the parties.' In hinting at the complex background of Middle Eastern politics against which any Ambassador would have to act, the Jordanian Prime Minister was, had the police but known it, foreshadowing the failure of the idea as a negotiating ploy.

DAY 4; SATURDAY 3 MAY 1980

66. The day began quietly, with no indication of the tensions which were to build up in both terrorists and negotiators as the hours passed. The police were feeling fairly optimistic,

The Iraqi Ambassador immediately told the FCO that he was willing to talk to the terrorists and the FCO had to stall politely. The Iranian government made it quite plain in various public statements that any involvement of the Iraqis was anathema to them and there was some anxiety in COBR as to the effect that this might have on the terrorists if they realised too early that the Iraqi was not going to arrive.

68.

69. The first negotiations of the day took place between 0910 and 0946 and produced a surprise. The terrorists, contrary to expectations, did not pursue the question of an Ambassadorial visit but reverted to their earlier preoccupation with publicity. They wanted to publish another message from the hostages.

patriotic Arab Iranians and that, contrary to what the Tehran government was saying, the hostages did not want to die as martyrs.

70. Salim finally expressed his irritation by refusing to talk over the landline and insisting on face to face negotiations. At 1213 PC Lock appeared at the window, followed by Karkouti and Afrouz. PC Lock said that he had written down what the terrorists had asked him to say. It began with a plea not to force the terrorists to take any action which they were desperate to avoid, like killing a hostage, and went on to say that they wanted the Ambassadors because they represented a guarantee of safety for them and the hostages. Lastly they wanted Tony Crabb's interview of the previous day to be broadcast and if Crabb was not produced at once a hostage would be killed. The tone seemed to be getting increasingly hysterical.

71. Karkouti spoke on behalf of the hostages. Morale, he said, was waning because of the delaying tactics of the police:

> 'I believe that tension is being built on us. They suspect that you have invoked a D notice on the interview yesterday. They are intelligent and educated men and are aware of this procedure. As far as they are concerned, they have completed their expedition and now wish to leave but it has been delayed by your response to their request. The only sufferers will be the hostages.'

He went on to say that neither the hostages nor the terrorists gave a damn for the reaction of the Iranian Government, which was inhuman: 'So we are seeking the humanity of the British because it seems it is the only way out.' The Chargé D'Affaires, Afrouz, seemed to have identified even more with the terrorists in his frequent use of the first person plural. He began by contrasting the hostages' situation with that of the American hostages in Iran.

> 'Our relationship with those around us is not of oppressor and oppressed. Whatever I am telling is not at gunpoint. I am saying this willingly.... They have been treating us very nicely and I shall never forget their kindness. As diplomats our problem is that of the British Government. We have no TV or telephone. Please allow the newscaster to pay us a visit so that we can be heard. But the group and the hostages, our aim

SECRET

Salim then asked Crabb to take down a statement which would be dictated by the hostage Karkouti, and Harris said that his life was at stake. Crabb took down the following statement:

1. We swear to God and to the British people and Government that no danger whatsoever would be inflicted on the British and non-Iranian hostages as well as the Iranian hostages if the British Government and the British police don't kid the group and don't subject the life of the hostages and the group to any danger, and if things work to the contradictory direction everyone in this building will be harmed.

2. We demand the three Ambassadors, Algerian, Jordanian and Iraqi and a representative of the Red Cross to start their jobs in negotiating between us and the British Government to secure the safety of the hostages as well as the group's members and to terminate the whole operation peacefully. If any of the three Ambassadors is not available they could be substituted by, first, the Libyan, or the Syrian or the Kuweiti Ambassador.

3. The reason for us to come to Britain to carry out this operation is because of the pressure and oppression which is being practised by the Iranian Government in Arabistan and to convey our voice through the outside world to your country. Once again we apologise to the people and Government for this inconvenience.

SECRET

Karkouti said that if this statement was published there would be a 'positive response.' Afrouz then appeared and threw out two pieces of screwed up paper saying 'these are genuine things from the hostages.' The exchanges ended with PC Lock saying that the hostages were feeling isolated and that it was now the turn of the police to produce 'a sign of good faith.'

75. The pieces of paper thrown out of the window by Afrouz proved to contain another message from the hostages to their government which again expressed, whether genuinely or not, a certain degree of sympathy with the aims of the terrorists and support for the appearance of Ambassadors. The message to their President was clearly that they did not wish to die at martyrs. It was headed 'For the attention of His Excellency Mr Bani Sadr, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

> In order to put an end to the false and mischievous propaganda being mounted by Imperialist and pro-Imperialsit forces, we wish to clarify the situation as follows:
>
> The group which is presently occupying the premises of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic in London has stated that they belong to the Group of Mohedin Al-Nasser.
>
> They state and assure us that they are struggling for their legitimate rights as 'Arab - IRANIANS' and they are not against Islam. They do not want to break away from Iran and their demand is only for self-rule within the Islamic Republic of Iran.
>
> They have also assured us that they are patriotic IRANIANS, and they are not working for any Imperialist or anti-Islamic group.
>
> From what we have known of them and seen of them during this time, we believe that they are genuine, young, militant people devoted to their cause. They have also treated all those confined in this Embassy in a pleasant and humane manner.
>
> This makes us believe that the present situation can be resolved peacefully and honourably for all the people concerned.
>
> The group also feels that they have made their grievances known to the people concerned, and the only problem which needs to be resolved is to work out a formula so that the present situation can be ended peacefully.
>
> This seems to be possible only through the good offices of some Arab Ambassadors whom the group can trust and who can give good counsel to the group. We fully support the bringing in of such good offices and told the authorities accordingly.
>
> The hostages in the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

was unexpectedly released at 2015, bearing a message [illegible] deadline. If the statement was not broadcast by 2100, they would kill two hostages, but if it was broadcast they would release another one.

78. The broadcast organisations were immediately asked to put out the statement by 2100, especially the World Service to which the terrorists were believed, with Harris' help, to be tuned. It was read out by police at the scene and duly broadcast on BBC TV and LBC. Unfortunately the World Service only gave a summary of the statement and tension at the scene, reached catastrophic proportions with everyone fearing the worst. However, to everyone's relief, the terrorists released the Pakistani hostage Ali Guli Ghanzafar at 2120. It transpired that the terrorists had in fact heard their statement broadcast in full on Radio 2 at 2052 and were jubilant. Nevertheless the World Service had by this time been contacted and asked to carry the statement in full, just to be on the safe side. This they agreed to do and interrupted their broadcast to do so at 2128. The negotiator told Salim that he could hear it again on Radio 4 at 2200 if he wanted to and Salim said thank you very much. He was slightly peeved when the later broadcast described Ghanzafar as an Iranian and the negotiator agreed to get the mistake rectified. He thanked

SECRET

Salim for releasing the hostages and offered food. Salim asked for Persian food for the hostages and English food for the group.

79.

80. Discussion in COBR turned to the possible use of intermediaries on the following day. The position of the Red Cross was clarified when Sir E Shuckburgh, Chairman of the British Red Cross Society, made it known that two of his people could be made available on condition that they only relayed messages and were not accompanied by Ambassadors. As for the Ambassadors themselves, the terrorists had indicated that the representatives of Iraq, Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Syria and Libya would be acceptable to them. The Iraqi and the Libyan were not acceptable to us. The Algerian and the Jordanian had now said that their instructions were not to get involved. The Kuweiti and the Syrian were left as possibles and the Kuweiti was to be preferred since it was felt that the Syrian, while personally acceptable, might have unhelpful instructions. The meeting concluded with the thought that Mr Hurd could see the Kuweiti on the following day to see if he would be prepared to speak to the terrorists on lines acceptable to us; that is, on the basis that the terrorists were not going to be allowed to leave the country. The Syrian could be approached if the Kuweiti declined to act alone.

DAY 5; SUNDAY 4 MAY 1980

81.

82. The handling of the Ambassadorial question was obviously going to be tricky for the police at the scene and during the early hours of the morning the Home Office official in COBR summarised the points which had been made at the previous evening's meeting and sent it down by way of negotiating guidance, to the liaison official

SECRET

The atmosphere, as far as the police were concerned, was relaxed enough for them to be prepared to contemplate a visit to Zulu control by HRH Prince Andrew.

90. The police were increasingly worried as the afternoon wore on about the gap in negotiations which seemed to be opening as they waited for the results of the FCO discussions. They had not yet told Salim that the Iraqi was unacceptable because

they wanted to 'sugar the pill.' Unfortunately there was no readily identifiable way of doing this, and the most the terrorists could be told was that attempts to get an Ambassador had so far failed but that contacts were still being made. The negotiators spoke to Salim at 1706. He shouted that an aircraft must be provided tomorrow or the hostages would be killed. The negotiator took a tough line in reply and said that they would not get an aircraft and that they would be in trouble if they killed a hostage. At 1738 PC Lock appeared and said that they were complaining about the drilling again. He said that tension had increased, and this was borne out by the fact that the listening probes did not pick up much conversation among the hostages after the row earlier in the afternoon. At 1810 Lock was heard trying to explain why it was difficult to get Ambassadors to come, but he was told to shut up. An offer of food was rejected, but at 1900 medicine was requested and some tablets were sent in at 1924. The negotiator called Salim at 2010 to find out how the sick hostage was, to be told that someone was coming out. Karkouti came out of the door a few minutes later clutching his stomach.

91. The debrief of Karkouti produced a certain number of problems for the police and COBR. Immediately after his release he appeared extremely upset and complained of severe stomach pains. He was transferred to the Peel Centre Medical Unit where he was examined by a doctor who did not think that he would be able to withstand an interview lasting more than half an hour. He, however, composed himself so quickly as to arouse the interviewing officer's suspicions, and appeared eager to answer questions. During the interview he appeared to be promoting the interests of the terrorists and the way they had treated the hostages, and the officer felt that his demeanor was not quite right for a person who had just been released from five days in captivity. Karkouti had acted as spokesman for the terrorists over the previous days and it seemed possible that he might be negotiating on their behalf now. His known past connections with terrorist groups in Baghdad was another factor which left his position open to doubt, as was the fact that he immediately asked to be allowed to make a press statement on behalf of 'his friends.'

92. Nevertheless, Karkouti provided much useful background information on the disposition of the terrorists and their relationship with the hostages. He confirmed that there were six terrorists, led by Salim, all armed with machine pistols/hand guns which they swapped among themselves, and all possessing at least one hand grenade each. He said that they had all been in a good mood in the morning after the success of the broadcast the night before and that the terrorists had all taken showers and one had shaved. The afternoon row had erupted when two of the terrorists drew anti-Khomeini slogans on the wall of the room in which the hostages were being held. Two of them entered into a heated argument with the terrorists and one of them said that it was an insult to his religion. The terrorists had cocked their weapons but he, Karkouti, and Lock had acted as mediators and calmed the situation.

93. He also described another discussion which had taken place between him, Lock and Salim on the third day (2 May). Salim had said that they did not wish to harm anyone but wished only to gain publicity for their cause. He expressed great interest in what would happen if they surrendered, and was worried about the sound of drilling in case it meant that the police were going to storm the building. Both Lock and Harris had told him that the police would not do that but would wait the situation out. Salim said that any attempt to storm the building would cost the lives of all the hostages. After the broadcast they again spoke about British law and how it would affect them, thinking that if they surrendered they would spend many years in police custody. PC Lock had explained that they would go to prison and Karkouti had suggested that their presence in the country would be such an embarrassment to the British government that they would probably not remain there for long. They talked about surrender, and Lock offered to collect all their weapons in a box and carry them out first. Salim had said that they had now got all the publicity they wanted and were looking for a way out of the mess as they did not wish to die. Their original plan had been to obtain the release of the 91 prisoners in Iran, get an aircraft and make their getaway; but they now felt that the only way to guarantee their safety was for the Ambassadors to be present while they were

coming out of the Embassy. In Karkouti's opinion, only Ambassadors would do. Substitutes such as Arab journalists would not carry sufficient weight. He said that before his release Salim had told him that they were all very tired. They had expected it to be all over in 28 hours instead of which it had dragged on for five days. Karkouti thought it possible that Salim was beginning to lose his hold over the other terrorists, and said that PC Lock thought the same. As far as the hostages were concerned, however, the terrorists had repeatedly said that the non-Iranians would be safe as would the women, as it was against their religion and below their dignity to kill them.

94. The negotiator spoke to Salim at 2106 to thank him for releasing the hostage. Salim said that he did not want thanks, or food, just the meeting with the Ambassadors 'to find a peaceful solution to all this.' He sounded depressed. When the negotiator got in touch again at 2212 Salim asked about the Iraqi and Algerian Ambassadors. The negotiator said that nothing could happen tonight but that contacts were going on at a high level. At 2320 the police got down to discussing the tactics for the next day; COBR was already in session on the same subject.

95. As on the previous day, the senior Home Office official in COBR summarised the discussion which had gone on and sent it down to the scene by way of suggested negotiating tactics for the next day:

96. Finally that day, as if things were not difficult enough, Reuters reported that Tehran Radio had broadcast the text of a message from Mr Qotbzadeh to the hostages which went even further then before in offering them up for martyrdom:

> You, the revolutionary members of the Iranian Embassy in London. We admire your steadfastness and forebearance against the criminal actions of the Ba'athist Iraq as well as those of the agents of Imperialism and international Zionism. But we want you to know that in these critical moments in which you have been placed under heavy pressure by these criminal agents, the nation and the government of Iran are intimately standing beside you. Since it is a fact that the whole of the Iranian nation is prepared for martyrdom for continuity of our glorious revolution, and will under no circumstances yield to any kind of force and pressure exerted by imperialism and international Zionism, we feel certain that you are also ready for martydom alongside your nation and do not accept that Iranian nation pay ransom to the agents of world imperialists. You must rest assured that we shall save no effort for your release, and should you so wish and if need be, tens of thousands of Iranians are just ready to enter into the premises of the Embassy not with weapons but with cries of 'Allaho-Akbar': 'God is Great' and thus bring punishment upon these mercenaries of the Ba'athist Iraq in a manner they deserve.

Then at 1841 three shots were heard and confirmed by one of the snipers. At 1846 two men were seen near the door of the Embassy struggling with something heavy which looked like a body. At 1849 Salim spoke to the negotiators and said 'we have killed one hostage and we will kill another one in half an hour. All the hostages will be killed at once.'

118. The police asked Salim to let them collect the body and two men picked up the body in a yellow cardigan from outside the Embassy at 1855. It was an Iranian man, and it was clear that he had not been freshly killed. The Commissioner rang COBR and told the Home Secretary that he wished to commit the SAS. The Home Secretary said yes.

119.

123.

124.

125. The FCO had been asked to produce a note verbale which could be delivered to the Iranians and which would clarify our legal position in respect of any action that we had to take inside the Embassy premises. Unfortunately this did not arrive at the scene until the assault was under way (text at annex D) but it was delivered to the Consul General at about 1940. A second message, addressed to the Charge D'Affaires, was also delivered to the scene. It presented the compliments of Her Majesty's Government and requested him to lower the flag over the Embassy to half mast in memo of the death of President Tito. Unfortunately there was by then neither flag, flag-pole nor roof.

AFTERWORD

126. The resolution of the incident at the Iranian Embassy was hailed as a success both at home and abroad. In the sense that it could not be resolved by negotiation and that 5 terrorists and 2 hostages died, it was not a success; but despite the best efforts of all concerned, a point was reached on the sixth day where no further negotiation was possible. Once this impasse had been reached and the terrorists had shown that they were prepared to kill, the only way of saving the hostages was to send in the SAS. The achievement of the military operation in rescuing 19 hostages from the building in which six armed terrorists had more than 50 rooms to manoeuvre, was considerable.

127. The reason why negotiation failed in the end lay in the Government's determination not to give the terrorists a safe conduct out of the country. They were assured that their lives would be safe if they came out and released their hostages unharmed, but they were not prepared to surrender. They demanded the presence of certain Arab Ambassadors to supervise their departure from the country, and even when they were told that they would not be allowed to leave, they continued to demand the presence of Ambassadors at the scene. If it had been possible to produce an Ambassador who would have been prepared to speak to the terrorists on terms acceptable to us (ie to listen to their demands and perhaps join in asking them, on humanitarian grounds, to release their hostages), events might have taken a different turn; although in view of the terrorists' fixed determination to see the Ambassadors as a means of getting out of the country, and our equally fixed determination not to let them be used in this way, it seems unlikely that the production of Ambassadors would have had the result we wanted in persuading the terrorists to surrender. In the event, after some initially promising noises, the Ambassadors declined to appear either singly or together without the offer of a safe conduct. Attempts to persuade one or more of them to change their minds were going on right until the end, but the production of an Ambassador proved to be the sticking point for the increasingly tired

and tense terrorist leader who seemed by the final day to be comire from the other members of the group.

128.

129. But the Ambassadors were not the only element which made it dae police to bring the affair to a peaceful conclusion as they had done sieges of Spaghetti House and Balcombe Street. The scale and intensiger ation, the degree of Government and military involvement and the exter professional input required outstripped anything that had gone before. s first occasion on which COBR had to be activated; on the two previous os

police had contained the situation on their own, liaising with the Home Office as necessary. It was also the first occasion on which the SAS were deployed to resolve a terrorist incident in Great Britain.

130. Indeed, Spaghetti House was not properly a terrorist incident at all and even at Balcombe Street, where terrorists were involved, the taking of hostages was unplanned. The siege at Spaghetti House (77 Knightsbridge, SW1) arose from a robbery which was interrupted and where the 3 criminals chose to take hostages as an alternative to an attempt at escape. One of the criminals was coloured and the eight male hostages were Italian, but this was accidental and the international aspect which it suggested did not become significant. The Black Power theme was largely spurious. The siege at Balcombe Street followed police pursuit of four terrorists after they had fired shots from an automatic weapon at Scotts Restaurant, Mayfair, on the evening of 6 December 1975. They chose to barricade themselves in the living room of the flat of Mr and Mrs Mathews at 22B Balcombe Street in the hope of using them to gain a safe conduct to Ireland. There was a political motive here but the siege itself was unplanned. Even the Irish element paled into insignificance beside the complexity of the international and political ramifications of the siege at the Iranian Embassy, where the taking of hostages was preplanned in the hope of using them to force concessions from the Government of Iran and then ensure the safe conduct of the terrorists out of the country.

131. The numbers involved at Spaghetti House and Balcombe Street were small. At Spaghetti House, 3 criminals held 8 hostages from 28 September 1975 until the early hours of Friday 3 October. They were all confined in a basement storeroom and the police had access right up to the door. At Balcombe Street there were 4 terrorists and 2 hostages, one of them a woman. Again the police had access right up to the door of the room where both hostages and terrorists were contained The hostages were

held from 2130 on 6 December 1975 until 1625 on Friday 12 December. The police used food to good effect, offering only soup and sandwiches, and one of the things which encouraged the terrorists to surrender was the offer of a proper meal.

132. It was not so easy to operate in this way at the Iranian Embassy where 6 terrorists were holding 26 hostages of various nationalities, some of them women. One of the women was pregnant and a number of the hostages came to display various symptoms of hysteria and stomach illness.

133. The last and perhaps decisive difference between the Iranian Embassy siege and the other two incidents was the willingness of some of the participants to embrace martyrdom. It was extremely unlikely either at Spaghetti House or Balcombe Street that any of those involved was prepared to die. The terrorists at the Iranian Embassy were apparently prepared for this (and indeed called themselves the Group of the Martyr). The Government of Iran claimed publicly that its hostages were prepared for martyrdom rather than see their Government give in to the terrorists' demands, and

although this was certainly not true of all, it seems to have been true of some. Certainly some of the hostages attracted danger to themselves by having political arguments with their captors, and the hostage whose body was put outside, Lavasani, was said to have volunteered to die. This attitude was enough partially to overcome the effects of the 'Stockholm syndrome' in which a protective empathy has been known to build up over a period of time, between hostages and their captors. Some degree of respect and concern for the hostages did become apparent. The terrorists released five hostages, four of whom needed medical attention, and they seem to have treated the women with respect and to have undertaken not to kill them. The women in return tried to shield the surviving terrorist at the end. But there was insufficient rapport to allow the syndrome to take proper effect, with the result that when the time came to kill or to take the role of victim, it seems to have been done with comparative ease.

134.

Nevertheless, the Government remains committed to the policy of not giving in to terrorism, resolving terrorist incidents peacefully whenever possible, and using force only where it is necessary in order to save life.

Annex B

FOCAB008/30

00 CABINET OFFICE

GRS 212

CONFIDENTIAL
DEFKBY TEHRAN 010330Z
DESKBY ABU DHABI 010400Z
FM FCO 301920Z APR 80
TO IMMEDIATE TEHRAN
TELEGRAM NUMBER 270 OF 30 APRIL 1980
AND TO IMMEDIATE ABU DHABI

ATTACK ON IRANIAN EMBASSY LONDON: MY TELNO 267

1. ASSUMING YOU SEE NO OBJECTION, PLEASE DELIVER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESIDENT BANI SADR.
BEGINS
QUOTE I SHOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW OF MY DEEP PERSONAL CONCERN ABOUT THE SITUATION AT THE IRANIAN MEBASSY IN LONDON. THIS INTRUSION CONSTITUTES AN ACT OF TERRORISM AND AN INFRINGEMENT OF THE IMMUNITY OF DIPLOMATIC STAFF WHICH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FINDS TOTALLY REPUGNANT AND IS ACTING FIRMLY TO COUNTER. I HOPE THAT THIS INCIDENT WILL BE RESOLVED SPEEDILY AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE SAFETY OF THE LIVES AT STAKE WILL BE A PARAMOUNT CONSIDERATION. THE HOME SECRETARY IS PERSONALLY IN CHARGE OF THE SITUATION AND I AM TAKING A VERY CLOSE PERSONAL INTEREST. I WISH TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE SHALL BE KEEPING IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT.
UNQUOTE ENDS
2.

3. ABU DHABI PLEASE PASS TO IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER.

CARRINGTON

NNNN

SENT AT 01/0002Z PJ
RECD AT 01/0002Z KS

Annex C

EMBASSY OF THE
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
London

No. 2256/D.

Date: 30.4.1980

Note Verbale
MOST URGENT

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to His Excellency the Foreign Secretary and has the honor to draw His Excellency's attention to the incidence at this Embassy today in which lives of twenty odd Diplomats and staff including Charge d'Affairs and several women is under constant threat of death.

It is requested that His Excellency the Foreign Secretary will appreciate the severity of the threat and will order the security forces to take all possible measures to safeguard their lives.

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran avails itself of this opportunity to renew to His Excellency the Foreign Secretary the assurance of its highest consideration.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
London.

Annex D

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and have the honour to refer to the Embassy's Note Verbale No 2256/D of 30 April.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office wishes to assure the Embassy that in accordance with the obligations of the United Kingdom under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations the competent British authorities will take all apropriate measures to safeguard the lives of the members of the Embassy. For this purpose, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is proceeding on the basis that the Embassy's Note constitutes the necessary consent on the part of the Embassy for British security authorities to enter the premises of the Embassy if they deem it necessary.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

5 May 1980

Appendix 2

KHUZISTAN ("ARABISTAN")

1. Khuzistan is one of Iran's 23 provinces and is situated next to the Iraqi border. It contains Iran's main oilfields, the Abadan refinery, and Iran's largest dry-cargo port, Khorramshahr. Since the change of regime in February 1979 there have been sporadic clashes between the province's Arab population and the Iranian authorities. In the early summer of 1979 these were particularly violent, and led to some deaths and many arrests.

2. Khuzistan has a population of about 2½ million, of which about 1½ million are Arab (Iran's total population is 35 million). The Arabs feel discriminated against culturally and economically; few of them have achieved more than minor positions in government service, and the oil industry management and technicians are almost entirely Persian. On the other hand there is no division on religious lines, as most of the Arabs are, like the Persians, Shia Muslims. The comparative poverty of the local Arab population, many of whom continue to live a traditional village life, shows up starkly against the wealth brought to the province, and visible in the towns, as a result of the oil industry's activity there.

3. Khuzistan has been acknowledged as Persian territory by treaties as far back as the 17th Century, and treaties between Iran and Iraq in 1937 and 1975 reaffirmed this status. Iraq therefore has no legitimate claim to Khuzistan. There is, however, a long history of dispute over the exact line that the frontier should follow, particularly in the river Shatt al Arab. Since Khomeini came to power, relations between Iran and Iraq have increasingly deteriorated and Iraq has been behind some of the frequent, though so far relatively minor, incidents of sabotage to oil pipelines in Khuzistan.

4. Britain has a historical connection with the area. At the beginning of the Century, Shaikh Khazal of Mohammerah (Khorramshahr),

/who

who enjoyed a large degree of local independence, received assurances of protection from HMG. Britain had a strong interest in the region because of the Anglo-Persian oil company's activities and the weak central authorities in Tehran were unable to exercise any effective control there. Khazal was stripped of his possessions in 1925 by Reza Shah, and since his death in 1936 HMG have considered that they have no responsibility to his successors.

5. Arab claims that Khuzistan should secede from Iran are no more realistic than those put forward by other Iranian ethnic minorities such as the Azeri Turks, Kurds, Baluchis and Turkomen. The majority of Arabs in Iran in fact want an improvement in their political, cultural and economic conditions, not secession. But the idea that Khuzistan should be called "Arabistan" and should be ruled by Arabs, which was put forward by Nasser in the 1960s and is supported by current Iraqi propaganda, has considerable emotional appeal.

Appendix 3

PS/Mr Hurd

IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

1. I understand that Mr Hurd asked for a note on the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents and the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages.

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons including Diplomatic Agents

2. Both the United Kingdom and Iran are parties to this Convention. In the United Kingdom effect is given to this Convention under our law by the Internationally Protected Persons Act 1978. The Convention entered into force on 20 February 1977 and the following states in addition to the United Kingdom and Iran are parties: Bulgaria, Byelorussia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, GDR, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Rwanda, USSR, Sweden, Tunisia, Ukraine, USA, Yugoslavia, Romania, Australia, Ghana, Liberia, Cyprus, Pakistan, Philippines, Chile, Malawi, Dominican Republic, Zaire, Austria, Costa Rica, Iraq, India, Peru, Uruguay, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados.

3. The Convention obliges Contracting States to make the murder, kidnapping or other attack on the person or liberty of an "internationally protected person" (defined as including a diplomat) offences punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account their grave nature. Contracting States are also obliged to make violent attacks upon the official premises, private accommodation or means of transport of an internationally protected person, offences. Threats to commit such offences, as well as attempts and participation as accomplices in such offences, are also offences. Under the Convention, Contracting States are obliged to take into custody any person found in their territory who is suspected of having committed an offence covered by the Convention. Contracting States are then obliged either to extradite the offender or submit the case to their "competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution". Contracting States are also obliged to ensure that the offences covered by the Convention are included in all existing and future extradition treaties and states have the option in cases where there is no extradition treaty to use the Convention as the legal basis for extradition.

4. The offences which may have been committed by the terrorists in the case of the present Iranian Embassy seige are certainly covered by the Convention. As they have been committed within the United Kingdom, it would be appropriate for the United Kingdom to exercise jurisdiction rather than extradite the offenders. In any event, the application for extradition by the Iranians would almost certainly fail because the offences would be regarded as political. The United Kingdom would therefore be obliged under the Convention to take the offenders into custody and submit the

/case

case to its "competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution". In this connection, it should be noted that the Convention does not impose an absolute obligation to prosecute. In the United Kingdom a decision to prosecute would be taken by the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General in deciding whether or not to prosecute would, however, be acting in a quasi judicial capacity. Constitutionally he would not be acting as a member of the Government and would not be subject to the instructions of the Government in deciding whether or not to prosecute. In deciding whether to prosecute he would be entitled to consider whether it was in the public interest, in the widest sense, to institute proceedings and would be able to take into account any representations made by the Government in this regard. (In the case of Leila Khaled following the Dawson's Field hijackings, the Attorney-General was most anxious to ensure that his constitutional position was preserved). The United Kingdom's obligations under the Convention and the Attorney-General's constitutional position would clearly have to be taken into account if there were to be any question of a "deal" with the terrorists under which they would escape prosecution.

5. The most flagrant example of a breach of a state of this Convention has been the case of the American hostages in Tehran. Apart from the other breaches of international law which the Iranians have committed, they are clearly in breach of this Convention in failing to ensure the arrest and prosecution of the "students" holding the hostages. The Americans alleged, inter alia, that Iran was in breach of this Convention when they brought the case against Iran before the International Court of Justice. If it is true that the Iraqi Government have instigated the present seige of the Iranian Embassy, then the Iraqis too would be in breach of the Convention, apart from any other breaches of international law which they may have committed. Colombia is not a party to the Convention and if she were, she may have been in breach of the Convention by her recent action in providing an aircraft for the perpetrators of the recent Embassy siege to leave Colombia.

International Convention against the Taking of Hostages

6. This Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December last year and signed by the United Kingdom on 18 January. The United Kingdom has not yet ratified the Convention. It will require legislation in the United Kingdom before we can ratify. The following states have also signed the Convention: Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, US, Belgium, Chile, Panama, Liberia, Canada, Sweden, Jamaica, Gabon, Greece and Italy.

7. The structure of the Convention is basically similar to that of the Internationally Protected Persons Convention. Contracting States are obliged to either extradite or submit to prosecution the case of an offender found within their territory. The Convention does, however, oblige any state in which a hostage is held by an offender to "take all measures it considers appropriate to ease

/the

the situation of the hostage, in particular, to secure his release and, after his release, to facilitate, when relevant, his departure".

8. Although the Convention is not yet in force, it was adopted by an overwhelming number of votes in its favour by the General Assembly, including Iran. Since it was only opened for signature recently, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of the Convention.

9. Copies of the two Conventions are annexed.

2 May 1980

K J Chamberlain
Legal Counsellor

cc Mr Miers, MED
Mr Freeland, Legal Advisers
Mr Burton, MAED

CONFIDENTIAL

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR RELATIONS

Miscellaneous No. 19 (1975)

Convention

on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents

New York, 14 December 1973—31 December 1974

[The Convention is not in force]

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
by Command of Her Majesty
September 1975

LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

Cmnd. 6176 20p net

CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF CRIMES AGAINST INTERNATIONALLY PROTECTED PERSONS, INCLUDING DIPLOMATIC AGENTS

The States Parties to this Convention,

Having in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations[1] concerning the maintenance of international peace and the promotion of friendly relations and co-operation among States,

Considering that crimes against diplomatic agents and other internationally protected persons jeopardizing the safety of these persons create a serious threat to the maintenance of normal international relations which are necessary for co-operation among States,

Believing that the commission of such crimes is a matter of grave concern to the international community,

Convinced that there is an urgent need to adopt appropriate and effective measures for the prevention and punishment of such crimes,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

For the purposes of this Convention:

1. "internationally protected person" means:

(*a*) a Head of State, including any member of a collegial body performing the functions of a Head of State under the constitution of the State concerned, a Head of Government or a Minister for Foreign Affairs, whenever any such person is in a foreign State, as well as members of his family who accompany him;

(*b*) any representative or official of a State or any official or other agent of an international organization of an intergovernmental character who, at the time when and in the place where a crime against him, his official premises, his private accommodation or his means of transport is committed, is entitled pursuant to international law to special protection from any attack on his person, freedom or dignity, as well as members of his family forming part of his household;

2. "alleged offender" means a person as to whom there is sufficient evidence to determine *prima facie* that he has committed or participated in one or more of the crimes set forth in article 2.

(1) Treaty Series No. 67 (1946), Cmd. 7015.

ARTICLE 2

1. The intentional commission of:

(*a*) a murder, kidnapping or other attack upon the person or liberty of an internationally protected person;

(*b*) a violent attack upon the official premises, the private accommodation or the means of transport of an internationally protected person likely to endanger his person or liberty;

(*c*) a threat to commit any such attack;

(*d*) an attempt to commit any such attack; and

(*e*) an act constituting participation as an accomplice in any such attack shall be made by each State Party a crime under its internal law.

2. Each State Party shall make these crimes punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account their grave nature.

3. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article in no way derogate from the obligations of States Parties under international law to take all appropriate measures to prevent other attacks on the person, freedom or dignity of an internationally protected person.

ARTICLE 3

1. Each State Party shall take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over the crimes set forth in article 2 in the following cases:

(*a*) when the crime is committed in the territory of that State or on board a ship or aircraft registered in that State;

(*b*) when the alleged offender is a national of that State;

(*c*) when the crime is committed against an internationally protected person as defined in article 1 who enjoys his status as such by virtue of functions which he exercises on behalf of that State.

2. Each State Party shall likewise take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over these crimes in cases where the alleged offender is present in its territory and it does not extradite him pursuant to article 8 to any of the States mentioned in paragraph 1 of this article.

3. This Convention does not exclude any criminal jurisdiction exercised in accordance with internal law.

ARTICLE 4

States Parties shall co-operate in the prevention of the crimes set forth in article 2, particularly by:

(*a*) taking all practicable measures to prevent preparations in their respective territories for the commission of those crimes within or outside their territories;

without undue delay, the case to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution, through proceedings in accordance with the laws of that State.

ARTICLE 8

1. To the extent that the crimes set forth in article 2 are not listed as extraditable offences in any extradition treaty existing between States Parties, they shall be deemed to be included as such therein. States Parties undertake to include those crimes as extraditable offences in every future extradition treaty to be concluded between them.

2. If a State Party which makes extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty receives a request for extradition from another State Party with which it has no extradition treaty, it may, if it decides to extradite, consider this Convention as the legal basis for extradition in respect of those crimes. Extradition shall be subject to the procedural provisions and the other conditions of the law of the requested State.

3. States Parties which do not make extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty shall recognize those crimes as extraditable offences between themselves subject to the procedural provisions and the other conditions of the law of the requested State.

4. Each of the crimes shall be treated, for the purpose of extradition between States Parties, as if it had been committed not only in the place in which it occurred but also in the territories of the States required to establish their jurisdiction in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 3.

ARTICLE 9

Any person regarding whom proceedings are being carried out in connexion with any of the crimes set forth in article 2 shall be guaranteed fair treatment at all stages of the proceedings.

ARTICLE 10

1. States Parties shall afford one another the greatest measure of assistance in connexion with criminal proceedings brought in respect of the crimes set forth in article 2, including the supply of all evidence at their disposal necessary for the proceedings.

2. The provisions of paragraph 1 of this article shall not affect obligations concerning mutual judicial assistance embodied in any other treaty.

ARTICLE 11

The State Party where an alleged offender is prosecuted shall communicate the final outcome of the proceedings to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall transmit the information to the other States Parties.

The provisions of this Convention shall not affect the application of the Treaties on Asylum, in force at the date of the adoption of this Convention, as between the States which are parties to those Treaties; but a State Party to this Convention may not invoke those Treaties with respect to another State Party to this Convention which is not a party to those Treaties.

ARTICLE 13

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

2. Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of this Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by paragraph 1 of this article with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

3. Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 14

This Convention shall be open for signature by all States, until 31 December 1974 at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

ARTICLE 15

This Convention is subject to ratification. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 16

This Convention shall remain open for accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 17

1. This Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. For each State ratifying or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification or accession.

ARTICLE 18

1. Any State Party may denounce this Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. Denunciation shall take effect six months following the date on which notification is received by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 19

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall inform all States, *inter alia*:

(*a*) of signatures to this Convention, of the deposit of instruments of ratification or accession in accordance with articles 14, 15 and 16 and of notifications made under article 18;

(*b*) of the date on which this Convention will enter into force in accordance with article 17.

ARTICLE 20

The original of this Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts(*) are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall send certified copies thereof to all States.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Convention, opened for signature at New York on 14 December 1973.

[*For signatures and reservations see pages 8–11*]

(*) After the Convention has entered into force and been registered under Article 102 of the United Nations Charter, texts in the Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish languages will be published in the United Nations Treaty Series, available from Agency Section, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, P.O. Box 569, London SE1 9NY. Tel. 01-928 6977, ext. 410.

SIGNATURES AND RATIFICATIONS

State	*Date of Signature*	*Date of deposit of Instrument of Ratification*
Australia	30 December 1974	
Bulgaria	27 June 1974(*)	18 July 1974(*)
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	11 June 1974(*)	
Canada	26 June 1974	
Czechoslovakia	11 October 1974(*)	
Denmark	10 May 1974	
Ecuador	27 August 1974(*)	12 March 1975
Finland	10 May 1974(*)	
German Democratic Republic ...	23 May 1974(*)	
Germany, Federal Republic of...	15 August 1974(*)	
Guatemala	12 December 1974	
Hungary	6 November 1974(*)	26 March 1975(*)
Iceland	10 May 1974	
Italy	30 December 1974	
Mongolia	23 August 1974(*)	
Nicaragua	29 October 1974	10 March 1975
Norway	10 May 1974	
Paraguay	25 October 1974	
Poland	7 June 1974	
Romania	27 December 1974(*)	
Rwanda	15 October 1974	
Sweden	10 May 1974	
Tunisia	15 May 1974(*)	
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	18 June 1974(*)	
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	7 June 1974(*)	
United Kingdom	13 December 1974	
United States of America ...	28 December 1973	
Yugoslavia	17 December 1974	

ACCESSION

State	*Date of deposit of Instrument of Accession*
Ghana	25 April 1975(*)

(*) See pages 9–11 for texts of reservations.

SIGNATURES AND RATIFICATIONS

State	*Date of Signature*	*Date of deposit of Instrument of Ratification*
Australia	30 December 1974	
Bulgaria	27 June 1974(*)	18 July 1974(*)
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	11 June 1974(*)	
Canada	26 June 1974	
Czechoslovakia	11 October 1974(*)	
Denmark	10 May 1974	
Ecuador	27 August 1974(*)	12 March 1975
Finland	10 May 1974(*)	
German Democratic Republic ...	23 May 1974(*)	
Germany, Federal Republic of...	15 August 1974(*)	
Guatemala	12 December 1974	
Hungary	6 November 1974(*)	26 March 1975(*)
Iceland	10 May 1974	
Italy	30 December 1974	
Mongolia	23 August 1974(*)	
Nicaragua	29 October 1974	10 March 1975
Norway	10 May 1974	
Paraguay	25 October 1974	
Poland	7 June 1974	
Romania	27 December 1974(*)	
Rwanda	15 October 1974	
Sweden	10 May 1974	
Tunisia	15 May 1974(*)	
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	18 June 1974(*)	
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	7 June 1974(*)	
United Kingdom	13 December 1974	
United States of America ...	28 December 1973	
Yugoslavia	17 December 1974	

ACCESSION

State	*Date of deposit of Instrument of Accession*
Ghana	25 April 1975(*)

(*) See pages 9–11 for texts of reservations.

BULGARIA

On signing the Convention the People's Republic of Bulgaria made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

Bulgaria does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention, under which any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice, and states that, in each individual case, the consent of all parties to such a dispute is necessary for submission of the dispute to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice.

On ratifying the Convention the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria confirmed the above reservation.

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

On signing the Convention the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention, under which any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice, and states that, in each individual case, the consent of all parties to such a dispute is necessary for submission of the dispute to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

On signing the Convention the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic made the following reservation:

"The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention and declares that, in conformity with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, in each individual case, the consent of all parties to such a dispute is necessary for submission of the dispute to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice."

ECUADOR

On signing the Convention Ecuador made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

Ecuador wishes to avail itself of the provisions of article 13, paragraph 2, of the Convention, declaring that it does not consider itself bound to refer disputes concerning the application of the Convention to the International Court of Justice.

FINLAND

On signing the Convention Finland made the following reservation:

"Finland reserves the right to apply the provision of article 8, paragraph 3, in such a way that extradition shall be restricted to offences which, under Finnish Law, are punishable by a penalty more severe than imprisonment for one year and, provided also that other conditions in the Finnish Legislation for extradition are fulfilled.

Finland also reserves the right to make such other reservations as it may deem appropriate if and when ratifying this Convention."

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

On signing the Convention the German Democratic Republic made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

The German Democratic Republic does not regard itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, and reaffirms its view that in conformity with the principle of the sovereign equality of States the approval of all parties to any dispute is required in order to subject a certain dispute to arbitration or to submit it for decision to the International Court of Justice.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

On signing the Convention the Federal Republic of Germany made the following reservation:

". . . The Federal Republic of Germany reserves the right, upon ratifying this Convention, to state its views on the explanations of vote and declarations made by other States upon signing or ratifying or acceding to that Convention and to make reservations regarding certain provisions of the said Convention."

GHANA

On acceding to the Convention Ghana made the following reservation:

"(i) Paragraph 1 (*c*) of Article 3 of the Convention contemplates that a State may exercise jurisdiction when the crime is committed against its own agent. This may lead to some friction with the State in whose territory the crime has been committed or the State whose national the offender is. It may also not afford the offender a fair trial. Ghana therefore wishes to make a reservation on Article 3 (1) (*c*) of the Convention.

(ii) Paragraph 1 of Article 13 of the Convention provides that disputes may be submitted to arbitration, failing which any of the parties to the dispute may refer it to the International Court of Justice by request. Since Ghana is opposed to any form of compulsory arbitration, she wishes to exercise her option under Article 13 (2) to make a reservation on Article 13 (1). It is noted that such a reservation can be withdrawn later under Article 13 (3)."

HUNGARY

On signing the Convention the Hungarian People's Republic made the following reservation:

"The Hungarian People's Republic does not consider itself bound by the provisions of Article 13, paragraph 1 of the Convention. These provisions are at variance with the position of the Hungarian People's Republic according to which for the submission of disputes between States to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice the consent of all of the interested parties is required."

On ratifying the Convention the Hungarian People's Republic confirmed the above reservation.

MONGOLIA

On signing the Convention the Mongolian People's Republic made the following reservation:

"The Mongolian People's Republic does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention, under which any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice, and states that, in each individual case, the consent of all parties to such a dispute is necessary for submission of the dispute to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice."

ROMANIA

On signing the Convention the Socialist Republic of Romania made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

The Socialist Republic of Romania declares that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention, under which any dispute between two or more Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration or referred to the International Court of Justice.

The Socialist Republic of Romania considers that such disputes may be submitted to arbitration or referred to the International Court of Justice only with the consent of all parties to the dispute in each individual case.

TUNISIA

On signing the Convention Tunisia made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

No dispute may be brought before the International Court of Justice unless by agreement between all parties to the dispute.

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

On signing the Convention the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention, under which any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice, and states that, in each individual case, the consent of all parties to such a dispute is necessary for submission of the dispute to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

On signing the Convention the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics made the following reservation:

[Translation by the United Nations Secretariat]

"The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13, paragraph 1, of the Convention, under which any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice, and states that, in each individual case, the consent of all parties to such a dispute is necessary for submission of the dispute to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice."

Printed in England by Her Majesty's Stationery Office

20914 -208 3153788 Dd 253852 K8 9/75

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.6/34/L.23/Add.1
4 December 1979
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/CHINESE/ENGLISH/FRENCH/RUSSIAN/SPANISH

Thirty-fourth session
SIXTH COMMITTEE
Agenda item 113

DRAFTING OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES

ANNEX

International Convention against the Taking of Hostages

The States Parties to this Convention,

Having in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of friendly relations and co-operation among States,

Recognizing in particular that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Reaffirming the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as well as in other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly,

Considering that the taking of hostages is an offence of grave concern to the international community and that, in accordance with the provisions of this Convention, any person committing an act of hostage taking shall either be prosecuted or extradited,

Being convinced that it is urgently necessary to develop international co-operation between States in devising and adopting effective measures for the prevention, prosecution and punishment of all acts of taking of hostages as manifestations of international terrorism,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

1. Any person who seizes or detains and threatens to kill, to injure or to continue to detain another person (hereinafter referred to as the 'hostage') in order to compel a third party, namely, a State, an international intergovernmental organization, a natural or juridical person, or a group of persons, to do or abstain from doing any act as an explicit or implicit condition for the release of the hostage commits the offence of taking of hostages ('hostage-taking') within the meaning of this Convention.

2. Any person who:

(a) attempts to commit an act of hostage-taking, or

(b) participates as an accomplice of anyone who commits or attempts to commit an act of hostage-taking

likewise commits an offence for the purposes of this Convention.

Article 2

Each State Party shall make the offences set forth in article 1 punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account the grave nature of those offences.

Article 3

1. The State Party in the territory of which the hostage is held by the offender shall take all measures it considers appropriate to ease the situation of the hostage, in particular, to secure his release and, after his release, to facilitate, when relevant, his departure.

2. If any object which the offender has obtained as a result of the taking of hostages comes into the custody of a State Party, that State Party shall return it as soon as possible to the hostage or the third party referred to in article 1, as the case may be, or to the appropriate authorities thereof.

Article 4

States Parties shall co-operate in the prevention of the offences set forth in article 1, particularly by:

(a) taking all practicable measures to prevent preparations in their respective territories for the commission of those offences within or outside their territories, including measures to prohibit in their territories illegal activities of persons, groups and organizations that encourage, instigate, organize or engage in the perpetration of acts of taking of hostages;

(b) exchanging information and co-ordinating the taking of administrative and other measures as appropriate to prevent the commission of those offences.

Article 5

1. Each State Party shall take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over any of the offences set forth in article 1 which are committed:

(a) in its territory or on board a ship or aircraft registered in that State;

(b) by any of its nationals or, if that State considers it appropriate, by those stateless persons who have their habitual residence in its territory;

(c) in order to compel that State to do or abstain from doing any act; or

(d) with respect to a hostage who is a national of that State, if that State considers it appropriate.

2. Each State Party shall likewise take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over the offences set forth in article 1 in cases where the alleged offender is present in its territory and it does not extradite him to any of the States mentioned in paragraph 1 of this article.

3. This Convention does not exclude any criminal jurisdiction exercised in accordance with internal law.

Article 6

1. Upon being satisfied that the circumstances so warrant, any State Party in the territory of which the alleged offender is present shall, in accordance with its laws, take him into custody or take other measures to ensure his presence for such time as is necessary to enable any criminal or extradition proceedings to be instituted. That State Party shall immediately make a preliminary inquiry into the facts.

2. The custody or other measures referred to in paragraph 1 of this article shall be notified without delay directly or through the Secretary-General of the United Nations to:

(a) the State where the offence was committed;

(b) the State against which compulsion has been directed or attempted;

(c) the State of which the natural or juridical person against whom compulsion has been directed or attempted is a national;

(d) the State of which the hostage is a national or in the territory of which he has his habitual residence;

(e) the State of which the alleged offender is a national or, if he is a stateless person, in the territory of which he has his habitual residence;

(f) the international intergovernmental organization against which compulsion has been directed or attempted;

(g) all other States concerned.

3. Any person regarding whom the measures referred to in paragraph 1 of this article are being taken shall be entitled:

(a) to communicate without delay with the nearest appropriate representative of the State of which he is a national or which is otherwise entitled to establish such communication or, if he is a stateless person, the State in the territory of which he has his habitual residence;

(b) to be visited by a representative of that State.

4. The rights referred to in paragraph 3 of this article shall be exercised in conformity with the laws and regulations of the State in the territory of which the alleged offender is present subject to the proviso, however, that the said laws and regulations must enable full effect to be given to the purposes for which the rights accorded under paragraph 3 of this article are intended.

5. The provisions of paragraphs 3 and 4 of this article shall be without prejudice to the right of any State Party having a claim to jurisdiction in accordance with paragraph 1 (b) of article 5 to invite the International Committee of the Red Cross to communicate with and visit the alleged offender.

6. The State which makes the preliminary inquiry contemplated in paragraph 1 of this article shall promptly report its findings to the States or organization referred to in paragraph 2 of this article and indicate whether it intends to exercise jurisdiction.

Article 7

The State Party where the alleged offender is prosecuted shall in accordance with its laws communicate the final outcome of the proceedings to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall transmit the information to the other States concerned and the international intergovernmental organizations concerned.

Article 8

1. The State Party in the territory of which the alleged offender is found shall, if it does not extradite him, be obliged, without exception whatsoever and whether or not the offence was committed in its territory, to submit the case to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution, through proceedings in accordance with the laws of that State. Those authorities shall take their

/...

decision in the same manner as in the case of any ordinary offence of a grave nature under the law of that State.

2. Any person regarding whom proceedings are being carried out in connexion with any of the offences set forth in article 1 shall be guaranteed fair treatment at all stages of the proceedings, including enjoyment of all the rights and guarantees provided by the law of the State in the territory of which he is present.

Article 9

1. A request for the extradition of an alleged offender, pursuant to this Convention, shall not be granted if the requested State Party has substantial grounds for believing:

(a) that the request for extradition for an offence set forth in article 1 has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of his race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin or political opinion; or

(b) that the person's position may be prejudiced:

(i) for any of the reasons mentioned in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph, or

(ii) for the reason that communication with him by the appropriate authorities of the State entitled to exercise rights of protection cannot be effected.

2. With respect to the offences as defined in this Convention, the provisions of all extradition treaties and arrangements applicable between States Parties are modified as between States Parties to the extent that they are incompatible with this Convention.

Article 10

1. The offences set forth in article 1 shall be deemed to be included as extraditable offences in any extradition treaty existing between States Parties. States Parties undertake to include such offences as extraditable offences in every extradition treaty to be concluded between them.

2. If a State Party which makes extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty receives a request for extradition from another State Party with which it has no extradition treaty, the requested State may at its option consider this Convention as the legal basis for extradition in respect of the offences set forth in article 1. Extradition shall be subject to the other conditions provided by the law of the requested State.

3. States Parties which do not make extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty shall recognize the offences set forth in article 1 as extraditable offences between themselves subject to the conditions provided by the law of the requested State.

4. The offences set forth in article 1 shall be treated, for the purpose of extradition between States Parties, as if they had been committed not only in the place in which they occurred but also in the territories of the States required to establish their jurisdiction in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 5.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall afford one another the greatest measure of assistance in connexion with criminal proceedings brought in respect of the offences set forth in article 1, including the supply of all evidence at their disposal necessary for the proceedings.

2. The provisions of paragraph 1 of this article shall not affect obligations concerning mutual judicial assistance embodied in any other treaty.

Article 12

In so far as the Geneva Conventions of 1949 for the protection of war victims or the Additional Protocols to those Conventions are applicable to a particular act of hostage-taking, and in so far as States Parties to this Convention are bound under those conventions to prosecute or hand over the hostage-taker, the present Convention shall not apply to an act of hostage-taking committed in the course of armed conflicts as defined in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Protocols thereto, including armed conflicts mentioned in article 1, paragraph 4, of Additional Protocol I of 1977, in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist régimes in the exercise of their right of self-determination, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Article 13

This Convention shall not apply where the offence is committed within a single State, the hostage and the alleged offender are nationals of that State and the alleged offender is found in the territory of that State.

Article 14

Nothing in this Convention shall be construed as justifying the violation of the territorial integrity or political independence of a State in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations.

/...

Article 15

The provisions of this Convention shall not affect the application of the Treaties on Asylum, in force at the date of the adoption of this Convention, as between the States which are parties to those Treaties; but a State Party to this Convention may not invoke those Treaties with respect to another State Party to this Convention which is not a party to those treaties.

Article 16

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

2. Each State may at the time of signature or ratification of this Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by paragraph 1 of this article with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

3. Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 17

1. This Convention is open for signature by all States until ... at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

2. This Convention is subject to ratification. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. This Convention is open for accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 18

1. This Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. For each State ratifying or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after deposit by such State of its instrumen of ratification or accession.

Article 19

1. Any State Party may denounce this Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. Denunciation shall take effect one year following the date on which notification is received by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 20

The original of this Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall send certified copies thereof to all States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Convention, opened for signature at New York on ...

Appendix 7

(13)

FOREIGN OFFICE STATEMENT

We share the general relief that this seige has been brought to a successful conclusion and that 19 of the hostages were rescued from the Embassy as a result of incisive military action in support of the Police. We extend our sympathy to the Iranian authorities and to the family of the Embassy official who was killed before the attack began.

Throughout the occupation of the Iranian Embassy we have kept in close touch with the Iranian Government and with Arab Ambassadors in London.

The Iranian Government requested us at the very beginning of the seige to take all possible measures to safeguard the lives of their hostages, and we confirmed to their representative in writing that this constituted the necessary consent for our action

During the weekend the Minister of State Mr Hurd discussed the situation with a number of Arab Ambassadors with a view to establishing whether there was scope for the Ambassadors to help achieve a peaceful solution. He made it clear that in no circumstances was the Government prepared to offer to the terrorists a safe conduct out of the country. This would have been directly contrary to our international obligations and would have made a mockery of our steadfast opposition to the spread of international terrorism.

(116)

Appendix 8

Message telephoned from the British Embassy, Tehran - Message from Iranian President to the Prime Minister.

Excellency Mrs Margaret Thatcher the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

I should like to express my gratitude for the persevering action of your police force that proved its competence during the unjust hostage - taking event at the Iranian Embassy in London, and the lives of all but one of our very dear children were saved in this event.

With regards
the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
ABUL HASSAN BANI SADR

Appendix 9

which does not devote such a large proportion of its budget to agriculture. However, we must accept and admit that the work of the Community, particularly in co-operation over foreign affairs, has been excellent and is not hindered in any way by a number of disagreements about internal matters.

IRANIAN EMBASSY, LONDON

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. William Whitelaw): Mr. Speaker, I will, with permission, make a further statement about the taking of hostages by armed gunman at the Iranian embassy.

As the House is aware, this incident was brought to a conculsion yesterday evening following an assault by members of the Special Air Service Regiment. I regret that it proved necessary to resort to the use of force, but there was in the end no alternative. The terrorists killed two hostages. The outcome of the assult, I believe, speaks for itself. Of the 19 hostages known to be alive when the assault took place, all were rescued. Sixteen have already been discharged from hospital. Three remain there. Four gunman are believed to have been killed in the assault and another is in police custody. None escaped. There were no police or SAS casualties.

Throughout five days of the siege, the Metropolitan Police patiently sought to negotiate towards a peaceful conclusion. As a result of their efforts, five hostages were, progressively, released. On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and myself I made it clear to the Commissioner that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to give in to the terrorists' demands for a safe conduct out of this country. Subject to that overriding consideration, we did everything in our power to persuade the terrorists peacefully to surrender and free the hostages. It was in the light of that policy that my hon. Friend the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office sought the assistance of some ambassadors from certain Middle East countries but help from that source was not possible. The Commissioner of Police underlined the approach that his officers were taking in a personal written message that was delivered into the Iranian Embassy yesterday. The help of a Muslim imam was also sought. He spoke personally to the gunman in an attempt to persuade them not to take action that would be damaging both to their hostages and to themselves.

As yesterday progressed it became increasingly clear, however, that the days of patient negotiation and of personal

direct appeals were
their objectives. I
sence the gunman
to kill hostages if d
As soon as it becam
begun to carry
authorised, at the C
the commitment of

I know that the H
with me in conra
politan Police on
carried out with
tion. Their cond
example of the b
British police. Th
assault and rescu
tribute to the prof
of the SAS. I am
and, indeed, the co
the Government in
those involved
civilian. Our sym
families and friend
who have been kil

Finally, Mr. Sp
add this: the way
was conducted and
conclusively the
British Governmen
allow terrorist blac

Mr. Merlyn Rees
retary aware that
that he was right.
State in charge
last six days, to
tions and discuss
act in the way that
on television? I
that the overall
out and that
procedures but
at two levels—
the police? On
on both sides of
him to convey
shown by many
police, the SAS.
We echo his sym
those who were

Is the Home Se
believe that he
SAS at an early
needed to be us
believe that the
moment ago by
by the Commis
to the credit of
feeling that all

direct appeals were not going to achieve their objectives. From the start of the seige the gunman regularly threatened to kill hostages if demands were not met. As soon as it became clear that they had begun to carry out those threats, I authorised, at the Commissioner's request, the commitment of the SAS.

I know that the House will wish to join with me in congratulating the Metropolitan Police on an operation that they carried out with skill, care and determination. Their conduct throughout was an example of the highest standards of the British police. The success of the final assault and rescue is an outstanding tribute to the professionalism and bravery of the SAS. I am sure that the House, and, indeed, the country, will wish to join the Government in giving thanks to all those involved—police, military or civilian. Our sympathy goes to the families and friends of those hostages who have been killed or injured.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would simply add this: the way in which this incident was conducted and resolved demonstrates conclusively the determination of the British Government and people not to allow terrorist blackmail to succeed.

Mr. Merlyn Rees: Is the Home Secretary aware that the Opposition believe that he was right, as the Secretary of State in charge of the operation in the last six days, to take time for negotiations and discussion before deciding to act in the way that we saw last evening on television? Is he aware that we believe that the overall operation was well carried out and that it shows the merit of the procedures built up for operational control at two levels—ministerially and with the police? On behalf of hon. Members on both sides of the House, may I ask him to convey our tribute to the bravery shown by many of those involved—the police, the SAS, and other individuals? We echo his sympathy to the relatives of those who were killed.

Is the Home Secretary aware that we believe that he was right to bring in the SAS at an early stage, just in case they needed to be used? Is he aware that we believe that the right note was struck a moment ago by the Secretary of State and by the Commissioner last night, which is to the credit of all concerned? There is a feeling that all has gone well and that we have won something, but it was not expressed in that way. Last night it was said that it was a matter of deep regret that the siege had to be ended by violence. Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that I believe that that is the right approach to such a matter?

Is the Home Secretary further aware that we believe that the Government were right to make it clear that in no way will any British Government be prepared to offer safe conduct to those who commit criminal acts? Does he agree that lessons are to be drawn from the events of the last six days, operationally and in general?

May I ask the Home Secretary a number of questions, which should be asked now that the events are over? Given the spread of Middle East terrorism to this country, will the right hon. Gentleman ask the Foreign Secretary to impress on Middle East embassies that passports should not be given under any pretext to people who are not their nationals? Will he remind them that the carriage of arms under diplomatic protection is an unfriendly act?

What is going on in the Libyan embassy? Are the people working there officially accredited to this country? I bring to the Home Secretary's notice what the Americans have done in that respect.

What steps are being taken to deal with Colonel Gaddafi's threat to liquidate Libyan nationals in Britain unless they return home? That threat has been made, and steps must be taken to ensure that it does not happen.

We accept students from all parts of the world who come to our universities and polytechnics. Long may that continue. It is an important part of our life. However, why is it so easy for Iranians to come here to follow courses that have sprung up in institutions in different parts of the country when Asians and West Indians who want to come here to study are forbidden to do so? Will the Home Secretary examine the ease with which Iranian students can come here for that purpose?

Mr. Whitelaw: I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his generous tribute to all those involved in the operation. As he and the Leader of the Opposition will appreciate, planning in advance of such operations has

[Mr. Whitelaw.]
been conducted by successive Governments and was most important when it came to the moment of carrying out the operation. I pay tribute to all the planning that has been done in the past. It was extremely important.

I shall certainly draw the attention of the Foreign Secretary to the points that the right hon. Gentleman made about Middle East terrorism, passports, and the carriage of arms. As to the Libyan embassy position, we have made it clear that we expect the law in our country to be carried out. I note the right hon. Gentleman's question and shall consider carefully what he said.

Concerning the last point I would, of course, point out that under the amended immigration rules that I introduced recently the regulations to deal with those who might be described as bogus students were greatly tightened up. Nevertheless, I think that the right hon. Gentleman makes a broader point, which is taken by many people in this country, and I undertake to look into that as well.

Mr. David Steel: Is the Home Secretary aware that my colleagues and I would wish to be associated with the tributes to the patience and courage of the police and the SAS and, in particular, to the high standard of competence shown in this operation?

Mr. Skinner: He wants a share of the action.

Mr. Steel: Will the right hon. Gentleman also accept that we wish to be associated with the remarks by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition about the lesson that the Iranian Government should learn from this episode? May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether he will—without necessarily giving details to the House—undertake to review the standard of protection that we offer to politically sensitive embassies in London?

Mr. Whitelaw: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for what he said and I am glad that he and his colleagues wish to be associated with the tributes to those concerned in the operation. Of course, it is our duty to afford protection to the various embassies, but I would add that the embassies themselves have a considerable duty to organise their own protection, and many of them do that. All embassies should carefully consider that issue but I take the right hon. Gentleman's point.

Mr. Churchill: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the heroic actions of 5 May command the admiration not only of the nation but of the world? Does he further agree that, by contrast, they make the TUC's politically motivated day of inaction on 14 May appear all the more petty and futile?

Mr. Whitelaw: I think, perhaps, that I would be wise to confine my remarks to my responsibilities as Home Secretary. They seem to have been quite sufficient in themselves in recent days.

Mr. J. Enoch Powell: Will the Home Secretary confirm the understanding that the reference at the end of his statement to the determination of the British Government and people applies equally to all parts of the United Kingdom?

Mr. Whitelaw: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Buck: Is my right hon. Friend aware that the whole House wishes to be associated with the congratulations to the SAS and the police force? We should also like to congratulate him for taking the bold decision to send in the SAS. Was their action not further acknowledgment of the sheer professionalism of our forces? Will my right hon. Friend seek to mark, in some way, the marvellous success of this operation, if not by the striking of a medal, at least in a manner that demonstrates how we appreciate what has been done on this occasion?

Mr. Whitelaw: I am grateful for what my hon. and learned Friend said about all who took part in the operation, and I am also grateful to him for his personal reference to me. I can only say that such was the care with which all the operations were planned that the final decision had to be taken by the Home Secretary. Of course, if things go right it is good: if thing do not go right the situation can indeed be very difficult. However, that decision is one of the easier actions to take in the final event. I appreciate that I might not be standing here saying that today had events turned out differently.

Mr. Mellish: Speaking as a Londoner, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman to convey to the Commissioner of Police

of the Metropolis the deep appreciation of all Londoners for the magnificent job that the police did during the siege? Will the Home Secretary also convey to the Commissioner the fact that the vast majority of Londoners respect and admire the police force and wish them well?

Mr. Whitelaw: I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman. I will certainly pass on that message to the Commissioner. I think that it would be appropriate for me to say, having been in close contact with the Commissioner over all these days, that I greatly admired his personal courage and steadfastness during an extremely difficult operation. I should like this House to know that. I shall be pleased to pass on to him the congratulations offered not only to him but to all the members of his force. Such congratulations are extremely well deserved.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I propose to call two more hon. Gentlemen only from either side.

Sir William Clark: Is my right hon. Friend aware that, as has already been said, not only the whole House but the whole world will congratulate the SAS and the Metropolitan Police on the way in which this matter was handled? Does he agree that it is time that some action was taken to prevent non-British people demonstrating in this country, thus putting our police forces at risk? Is it not time that we considered telling foreigners that if they wish to demonstrate they should demonstrate in their own countries?

Mr. Whitelaw: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for what he said in support of all those who carried out the operation. Concerning demonstrators, we have recently published a Green Paper on public order, which raises many questions, including the one referred to by my hon. Friend. It is important that we should consider these questions together. They raise difficult issues about freedom in a democratic society, which we in this House would do well to ponder carefully.

Mr. Ogden: Was any request made by the Home Secretary or the Commissioner to radio, television and news reporters to be cautious in their reporting in order to deny to those inside the embassy information that might have hindered security operations? Has the Home Secretary any information on the reason why the attitude of the terrorists, who at one time were showing a degree of humanity by releasing hostages, suddenly changed to murdering them? Will he accept that the important question is not how successful we were in getting people out but how they came to be in that situation in the first place?

Mr. Whitelaw: Inevitably, events such as this are a matter of major public concern. They are, therefore, bound to be covered by TV and radio. Had there been a moment when it was felt necessary to ask the authorities concerned to exercise restraint, that restraint would have been asked for, but I must tell the hon. Gentleman that such an occasion did not, in the final event, arise.

As to the hon. Gentleman's other point, I would prefer to go no further into the details of the operation. I think that I would be wise not to do so.

Mr. Eldon Griffiths: Has not this event—like many others—underlined that the first social service that any Government owes to its people is the maintenance of the Queen's peace? Will my right hon. Friend therefore dismiss all those calls that have been heard recently in this House for the abolition of the Special Patrol Group, for the standing down of the Special Air Service, for the reduction of powers under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, for the reduction of MI5 and the security services, and for the control by the borough of Lewisham of the operations of the Metropolitan Police?

Mr. Whitelaw: It is well known that I believe that the maintenance of the services that look after and protect our citizens is of vital importance. I believe that those service must be preserved and encouraged in all their forms. I have never disguised from the House my view on that. The way in which we employ the British police service is of enormous importance.

What pleases me about this operation is that we brought it to a successful conclusion while, at the same time, preserving the highest standards of the British police service and demonstrating that we have a community police service in this country.

Mr. Edward Lyons: While I share in the general satisfaction, may I ask the Home Secretary about the surviving gunman? Bearing in mind that the alleged killings took place within the Iranian embassy, is this man to be repatriated to Iran or is he to be tried in the courts of this country?

Mr. Whitelaw: I understand, on advice, that he is to be subject to the due process of law in this country.

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

Mr. Dalyell: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, of which I have given you notice, arising out of your statement on Thursday, reported in col. 1641 of *Hansard*. As one who has been plaguing Prime Ministers since 15 December 1970 on questions about the Diego Garcia base, may I ask for your protection in relation to the ruling by the Prime Minister? It seems to many of us that Downing Street has ruled out these questions because they are inconvenient to the Prime Minister.

May I ask a direct question, even if it be a bit hypothetical? If we are not to be allowed to put questions on movements through allied bases, does it mean that, for example, we cannot ask questions about movements of food aid to Kampuchea? Indeed, would you rule on the whole issue of questions that are blocked suddenly and rather uncharacteristically by the Prime Ministers in this way?

Mr. Speaker: I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman for giving me notice this morning that he would raise this matter this afternoon. It gave me an opportunity to prepare a considered statement in reply to his point of order.

There is long-standing rule of the House that a question may not be tabled if it is already fully covered by an answer or by a refusal to answer. In 1972 the House relaxed the rule, which previously applied for a whole Session, so that information refused in answer to a question may now be asked for again in three months' time.

The Prime Minister has refused to confirm or deny movements through allied bases. Any question on this subject must therefore, be tested against that refusal by the Table Office and, if the question is referred to me, by myself. Obviously I cannot rule on particular questions until I have considered them, and I am sure that the House would not expect me to comment on any hypothetical questions that hon. Members might have in mind.

MEMBERS' CONSTITUENCY INTERESTS

Mr. Russell Johnston: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. On 24 July last, in response to a point of order from the hon. Member for Workington (Mr. Campbell-Savours) complaining about a question by the hon. Member for Lancaster (Mrs. Kellett-Bowman), you gave a ruling to which, in your own words, you gave particular stress. You said:

> "I first want to give a ruling on a very important question. The wider constituencies belonging to the Assembly of Europe have no bearing at all upon us here. I treat every hon. Member as a Member for the constituency for which he or she was elected to this House."——[*Official Report*, 24 July 1979; Vol. 971, c. 349-50.]

That was a ruling which, with respect to you, Mr. Speaker, was still somewhat open to interpretation. Indeed, the following day the parliamentary correspondent of *The Guardian* made his interpretation —an interpretation with which I felt I agreed, but hon. Members may differ— and said:

> "The Speaker of the Commons yesterday ruled that a Euro MP could not raise constituency problems of another Westminster MP simply because they come within his or her Euro boundaries."

That interpretation, so far as I know, has neither been confirmed nor denied by anybody. *The Guardian* correspondent on that occasion interpreted your words, Mr. Speaker—

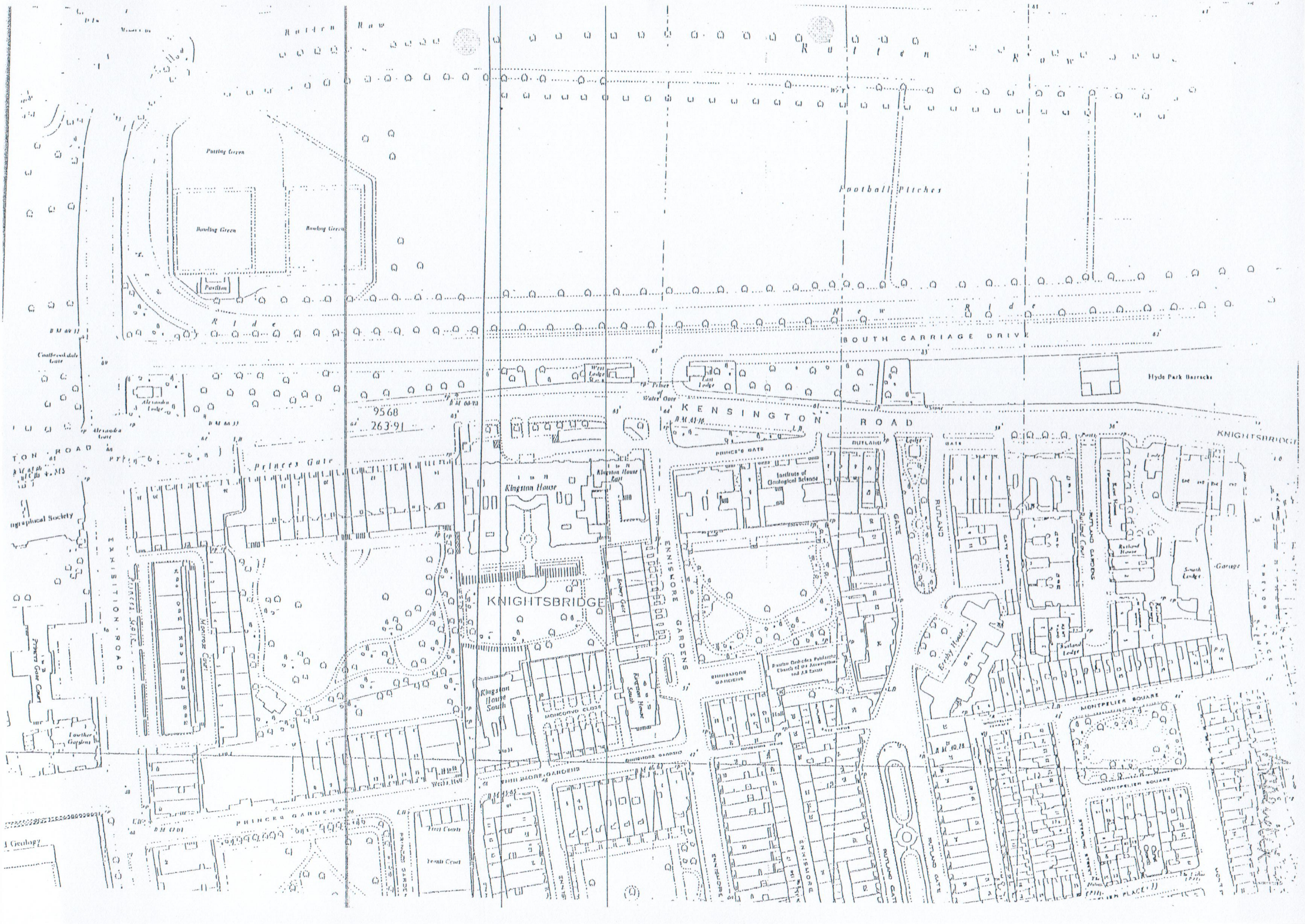
> "I treat every hon. Member here as a Member for the constituency for which he or she was elected to this House"——

as meaning that the rights of Euro MP's extended

> "only to constituencies for which they were elected to this House."

If that interpretation is correct, it must have clear implications also in regard to what is to be regarded as proper behaviour for a Member elected only to this House vis-a-vis another Member's constituency, not least because the hon. Member for Lancaster is a Member of this House. Certainly this view is widely held.

Appendix 10


Putting Green
Bowling Green
Bowling Green
Pavilion
Football Pitches
SOUTH CARRIAGE DRIVE
Hyde Park Barracks
KENSINGTON ROAD
Princes Gate
Kingston House
Kingston House South
KNIGHTSBRIDGE
ENNISMORE GARDENS
PRINCES GARDENS
RUTLAND GATE
RUTLAND GARDENS
MONTPELIER SQUARE
Tennis Courts
Garage

Appendix 13

INCIDENT AT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY (30 APRIL - 5 MAY 1980)

RESUMED INQUEST ON THE FIVE TERRORISTS

WESTMINSTER CORONERS COURT: 3/4 FEBRUARY 1981

The Coroner, Dr Knapman, considered written statements from SAS soldiers designated as J, H, HH, G, S, LL, E and X. Oral evidence was given by two soldiers referred to as CC and I. PC Lock gave evidence as to the circumstances in which Salim met his death and Mr Morris was also called. From among the Iranian hostages Mr Dadgar, Mr Fallahi and Mr Tabatabai gave evidence. The Coroner made the point that, if other hostages had not been called it was because their statements had no light to shed on the question of how the terrorists met their deaths, or, in the case of Mr Farouki, they were no longer in the country. He was at pains to point out that the witnesses had not been 'handpicked', and that where the jury was hearing written statements, they were hearing the whole statement and not selected bits. He also drew attention to the preamble to each statement in which the person making it acknowledged his liability to prosecution if he gave false evidence.

2. The evidence about the deaths was as follows:

Salim (the leader)

PC Lock described how he was struggling with Salim in the Minister/Counsellor's room on the first floor when the SAS came in. He was in pain and his eyes were hurting from the effect of the stun grenade and he was trying to stop Salim getting to his gun. He knew that Salim had carried a grenade and had cellotaped /have a spare magazine to the one in his gun so that he would/two ready for use. PC Lock said that all the terrorists felt that they would gain prestige if they died as martyrs. The soldier HH's statement described how he pushed Lock away and hit Salim with a long burst from his smg. Both he and his colleague J, who also fired, saw Salim's gun. Lock confirmed to them that there were 6 terrorists, and he was helped to the window to get air. Dr West, the forensic pathologist, (who confirmed that he had no connection with the police or MOD) gave the cause of death as firearm wounds to head and chest caused by two bursts of automatic fire. There were 15 entry and exit wounds.

Abbas

Written statements were read from soldiers J, H, G and S the gist of which was that Abbas was blown by/stun grenade across the doorway of the Ambassador's Office on the first floor and was seen to be holding a Browning type pistol in his hand. Soldier J hit him in the chest with a controlled burst and Abbas moved back into the room. The soldier knew that he had been hit but was still alive because he could hear him groaning. The room was in darkness and they called for G, who had a torch fixed to his weapon. Four soldiers went into the room and, located Abbas half lying on the sofa with a gun in his hand which they all took to be a 9 mm Browning. They all saw some ammunition drop out of his clothing. Abbas made a movement with the gun which H, the leader of the group, interpreted as hostile to himself and the other soldiers, and he hit him with a controlled burst of fire from 2 - 3 yards. The others also fired. The pathologis gave the cause of death as firearm wounds to the chest and abdomen. There were 21 entry wounds and 18 exit wounds. Supt Churchill-Coleman said that Abbas' Browning had not been found. He pointed out that the room had been badly damaged by fire and it was possible that the gun was in the ruins. Three Brownings belonging to the terrorists had been found although Nejad, the survivor, had said that there were 4 in all and that Abbas certainly had one. A charred air pistol was found in the room. It was not possible to say whether this had anything to do with the terrorists, or, alternatively, whether Abbas had actually been waving it at the soldiers and it had been mistaken, in the torchlight, for something more lethal.

Shai

Shai's body was found in the telex room on the second floor where the hostages were, together with that of Makki and the dead hostage Samadzadeh who was shot by the terrorists as the SAS went in. Sgt Cogbill, who was in an adjacent block of flats, saw the flash of gunfire directed from the top floor down onto the SAS who were going in at the back. This was believed to be Shai. Soldier LL described how he and his colleagues went in via the second floor rear. He chased Shai into the telex room. His machine gun jammed and he drew his Browning. Shai was on the left hand side of the room and had a grenade in his hand. He moved to detonate it and soldier LL fired one round. Shai was shot in the head and killed. Dr West gave the cause of death as a firearm wound to the head. There was only one such wound. The bullet had entered below the left ear and come out at the right temple. The former hostage Mr Fallahi said that an SAS man held Shai's head under his arm and shot him at point blank range. When questioned about this, Dr West said that this was quite impossible on the evidence and the ballistics expert, Mr Arnold, concurred. In the first place it would not be possible to inflict such a wound at point blank range without the soldier blowing his own arm off. More importantly, a shot at close range would have left unmistakeable burn and othermarks on the head of the deceased. There were no such marks, either on him or on the anorak collar through which the bullet had passed. He was clear that the shot which killed Shai had not been fired from close range. The Coroner reminded the jury that Mr Fallahi's evidence had been rather confused and that he had had language difficulties (despite the fact that he had had the benefit of an interpreter). All the Iranian witnesses emphasised the noise, smoke and confusion in the room and none of them had seen the shot. Supt Churchill-Coleman said that a grenade was found within inches of Shai's body.

Feisal

There seemed initially to be a conflict of evidence about the manner and place of Feisal's death since Mr Tabatabai, a former hostage, seemed at first to imply that he had seen Feisal shot in the back of the head at point blank range by an SAS soldier in the telex room. Evidence was then given that Feisal had been brought out of the telex room after the hostages had pulled a grenade and had been shot at the bottom of the stairs. When questioned again Mr Tabatabai said that he had not said that he had seen Feisal actually shot. He had seen him being held by his hair by an SAS man who was holding a gun but he had been moved out with his fellow hostages at that point and could not say how or where Feisal actually died. Soldier I gave oral evidence about the scuffle at the top of the stairs where Feisal was identified as a terrorist, and the warning shouted from his colleagues that he had a grenade. Soldier I saw an olive green Russian type grenade in Feisal's right hand as he came down the stairs and hit him on the head with the butt of his gun. He could not open fire because of the other soldiers around. Soldiers HH, E, X and H fired on Feisal at the bottom of the stairs. His grenade was picked up and given to DI Lewis. Dr West gave the cause of death as multiple firearm wounds. There were 39 entry wounds and 33 exit wounds. Mr Arnold, the ballistics expert, said that the 11 bullets recovered from the body had come from 4 different SAS guns. The Coroner decided not to read the statements of soldiers K and U which said essentially the same thing.

Makki

Makki was the last to be killed in the telex room at the point where nearly all the hostages were out and the building was well alight. He was identified as a terrorist by soldier VV who ordered him to lie down and covered him while soldier CC, who gave oral evidence, searched him for weapons. Makki was lying in a T position with his arms out and was told not to move. He understood English because when asked who he was he replied that he was a student. When CC parted Makki's legs, he saw what looked like the magazine for an automatic pistol (subsequently found under his body) and a holster. At this point Makki pulled his arms in towards his stomach and turned over. Soldier CC thought that he was going for a grenade and moved back. His colleague VV gave Makki

a burst of fire in the small of the back. Dr West said that the cause of death was firearm wounds to the neck and pelvis and that Makki must have been moving when shot. A grenade was found near his body.

3. In the course of his summing up, the Coroner pointed out that sending in the army implied that the situation required action which was over and above what the police were trained to do. The SAS knew when they went in that one hostage had been killed and it was thought probable that another death had occurred. The jury had seen a letter from the terrorists in which they threatened to blow up the Embassy. They had also seen a letter from the Commissioner urging them to surrender. It was known that the terrorists had automatic machine pistols, Brownings and grenades. It was possible that the whole building was booby trapped and that one false move could blow the whole place up. The jury were required only to find how, when and by what means each terrorist came by his death. They were precluded from framing a verdict in any way which might seek to determine matters of civil or criminal liability. The reason for the delay in concluding the inquest was that the DPP had asked him not to resume it until the conclusion of criminal proceedings against the surviving terrorist.

4. The jury were told that they must consider whether the SAS acted reasonably in all the circumstances. They were asked to imagine the atmosphere of confusion noise and terror which the hostages had described at the moment the soldiers went in. The building was shortly on fire, the rooms were full of smoke and CS gas, and all the hostage witnesses had suffered from its effects. Some had been wounded or thought themselves wounded. During the assault the terrorists opened fire on them, killing one and wounding two.

5. The terrorists died of multiple wounds in all cases except one. In regard to the number of shots fired, the jury were reminded that the SAS weapons fired 10 rounds per second. They were to imagine the soldiers spotting the terrorists through the smoke, unable to be sure whether they were carrying concealed weapons or grenades, and ask themselves whether it was reasonable to shoot first and ask questions afterwards. The SAS took no chances.

6. The Coroner then described the possible verdicts in the following terms:

(a) Justifiable homicide

Section3 of the Criminal Law Act 1967 provides that a person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of a crime. It was for the jury to say what degree of force was reasonable and they should ask themselves two questions: 1) whether the force used in this case was necessary, and 2) whether it was in proportion to the evil to be avoided. DAC Dellow had said that the situation had become so desperate that the police had handed control to a specialist branch of the Army. One hostage was known to have been murdered. The terrorists had threatened to kill the hostages and, if attacked, blow up the building with everyone in it. The jury might feel that this answered those questions.

(b) Unlawful killing

The jury could return this verdict if they considered that the conduct of the SAS had been totally unreasonable. He mentioned this verdict only for the sake of completeness and pointed out that, if evidence had emerged which suggested that an offence of murder or manslaughter had been committed, he would have had to adjourn the inquest and send the papers to the DPP. Having heard the evidence, and considering the special job which the SAS had been asked to do (ie to rescue the hostages) he thought that the jury would not wish to give too much consideration to this verdict.

(c) Misadventure

This verdict would be appropriate in a situation where a lawful act unexpectedly takes an unfortunate turn leading to death. In this case the jury could return this verdict if they thought that the soldiers had not intended to shoot at the terrorists but that they had, as it were, been caught in the cross-fire. However, it seemed clear from the evidence that the soldiers were aiming at the terrorists.

(d) Open verdict

This would be appropriate if the jury thought that there was insuffident evidence to record any of the other verdicts.

7. The jury recorded unanimous verdicts of justifiable homicide in each case. The Coroner's inquisition therefore records the cause of death (ie various types of firearm wounds) for each terrorist and the fact that he was shot on 5 May 1980 when members of the SAS stormed the Embassy at 16 Princes Gate where the deceased and other terrorists were holding the Embassy staff hostage.

Points of Interest

8. The former hostage Mr Morris (who insisted on shaking hands with one of the SAS men and thanking him) gave evidence that, having fired on the hostages when the SAS began their assault, the terrorists in the telex room then panicked and began to throw down their guns. Some were thrown out of the window. Subsequent evidence showed that they had not necessarily divested themselves of all their weapons (the gun held by Abbas) and they certainly still had grenades on them (Feisal, Shai and Makki). A grenade was dropped from the telex room onto the first floor balcony below, where the SAS were coming in. Fortunately it still had its pin. The allegation that the hostages helped the soldiers by identifying the terrorists was denied. It was Mr Fallahi the hostage, and not a terrorist, who waved something white out of the window as the assault went in. The Coroner said that the original statements made by the hostages to the police after the event had been brief. He noted that they had been 'embellished' in recent weeks in the press. In court the Iranian hostages denied saying that they had seen the terrorists shot after surrendering and the only one who had actually witnessed a killing was Mr Fallahi, who thought that he had seen Shai killed in a way which did not accord with the evidence of the pathologist.

9. The pattern of the evidence seemed to suggest that, while Salim, Abbas and Shai could be said to have died in the course of the fighting, the other two, Feisal and Makki need not have died. They were both 'taken alive' in the telex room. If Feisal had not produced his grenade on the stairs, and if Makki had obeyed the order to lie still and had not moved in a way which suggested that he too was going for a grenade, it is possible that neither would have been shot.

10. Supt Churchill-Coleman gave evidence about the arrest of the surviving terrorist Nejad. He said that Nejad was identified as a terrorist by soldiers and police as he came out of the building and that he was immediately taken apart from the other hostages to be searched. At no time was there any suggestion or possibility of his being taken back inside the Embassy for any purpose whatever.

SECRET

QPE 80 0011/0005/021/
HOSTAGES

SIEGE OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY

OFFICIAL HISTORY

FILE NUMBER

QPE/80 11/5/21

DISPOSAL DIRECTIONS	SIGNATURE	DATE
DESTROY AFTER YRS.		
PRESERVE		
CONSIDER AT 1st / 2nd REVIEW		

When papers require action by Noter, the word NOTE should be inserted in the box

1.
2.
3.

INDEX HEADINGS

SECRET

DATE	SEND TO	DATE	SEND TO	DATE
30 JUL 1982	G. McAllister RCAS	27-4-00		
3-7-80	S. Sawerby IRMS	22.11.06		
1/8/80				
7/8				
8/8				
12/9				
15/0				
26/1/81				
24/1/82				
1 APR 1982				
10 DEC 85				

QPE 80 0011/0005/021/

BF 1-4-87 E2

HOF000508035 TNT

SECRET

2628—6-9-73 XBD 2396

Reference APE/80 11/5/21

1. 23.6.80 R Andrew / R Hastie-Smith
2. 24.6.80 G Brown / R Andrew
3. 25.6.80 R Hastie-Smith / R Andrew - reply to doc 1
4. 27.6.80 C Farthing / R Andrew
5. 30.6.80 Note of meeting between Commissioner, Receiver & R Andrew.

I have spoken to Mr Farthing, MOD, who will commission from MOD (Army) + SAS at Hereford a piece of paper giving the MOD side of the siege. To be ready around September.

PD 1/8/80

was agreed to send me a copy of the diary he kept during the siege + any relevant articles which he writes during the next few months.

PD 6/8

It is apparent from the record of Mr Andrew's meeting with the Commissioner on 30 June (Doc 5) that there is some degree of uncertainty in the Metropolitan Police about the official history and the police contribution to it. I had a useful discussion yesterday with Deputy Assistant Commissioner Dellow about the form and content of the history from which it is clear that contributions will be needed from many different parts of the Metropolitan Police. These contributions are more likely to be forthcoming if it is known that the Commissioner actively supports the production of the official history.

2. As a way of dispelling any remaining suspicions which the Commissioner may have and in order to enlist his help, Mr Dellow suggested that a letter might be written to the Commissioner explaining the purpose of the official history how the police contribution will fit into it and offering a meeting with me at which the Commissioner could put forward his views. It would certainly help me in seeking out contributions from the Metropolitan Police if I can know that the Commissioner has given his blessing to the project.

? Write as within to the Commissioner.

Philippa Drew

PHILIPPA DREW

F4 Division
7 August 1980

Thank you. We should have letter

Reference QP 80 11/5/21

18. Mr Heaton to Miss Lane
18/11/80

19. to Miss Lane covering a contribution
21/11/80 to the siege. This now forms
on the
Appendix 1 of the History

20.) to Miss Lane covering an
account of the movement. This forms Appendix 6
of the History.
21/11/80.

21 Miss Lane to Mr Heaton re MPSB cooperation
28/11/80

22 Mr Heaton to Mr Phillips
1/12/80

Mr Phillips

* ~~I have placed within the first draft of a history of the Princes Gate~~ incident. It has been compiled largely from the log, Reuters reports, FCO telegrams and my own and other peoples' notes made in COBR. The Cabinet Office provided a digest of the log (doc 17) and produced two papers, one on the and one on the These now form appendices 1 and 6 respectively. The one is classified secret (appendix 6) and Mr has asked to be consulted if there is any proposal to circulate it outside the Home Office. I have provisionally marked it in the index for circulation within the Home Office only, and I have done the same for (appendix 5) because I imagine that you would not want the references to breakdown to be circulated outside the Office.

2. As you know, the police have contributed little to this exercise so far and will not release documents to us until the conclusion of the trial and inquest. I did have two conversations with DAC Dellow on the events of Day 1 and the way in which this incident differed from Balcombe Street and Spaghetti House, and I saw the Zulu log which helped on timings but was otherwise not much use.

3. As for the Army, I have spoken to and had several meetings with who has been most helpful. Like the police the SAS do not want to risk committing themselves to paper while judicial proceedings are pending,
and a few weeks ago I prevailed upon

CODE 18-77

MEMORANDUM

From K. Rouse
F4 Division

Telephone
Extension

To File.

[refer to D. Brennan's note 12.10.83]

Your reference
Our reference OPE/50 11/5/21
Date 14.1.85

There has been a draft of the 'official history' of the siege around since January 1981 (in pouch attached)

however, it is unclear from the papers whether this draft was circulated around the Whitehall network.

If such a circulation were to occur appendices 5 and 6 should not be released outside the Home Office (see Miss Lane's minute dated 20.1.80 on the minute sheet on file)

K Rouse 14/1/85

CONFIDENTIAL

CABINET OFFICE
70 WHITEHALL
LONDON SW1A 2AS

Mel, we spoke; please dig out the official History & any related papers concerning what was meant to be happening with it. Thanks Ian 17/10. Mr Smith. What is the position? 12 October 1983 Ian 17/10.

01-930 5422 ext

UO 1074

Dear Colin,

Official History of the Iranian Embassy Siege

I am very sorry to trouble you again about this, but the archives section here are pestering me as to what became of the official history of the siege. They have latched on to minute 4 of Item 5 of TO(80) 1st Meeting, where the Cabinet Office were invited to consider who might undertake the writing of an official history of the incident.

2. Our files take the story up to the point where my predecessor wrote to Miss C Lane in the Home Office on 13 October 1980, with a summary of the COBR log, and wishing her luck in her task! Can you shed any light as to subsequent progress?

Yours ever,

Denis

D BRENNAN

C E Birt Esq
F4 Division
Home Office
London
SW1

CONFIDENTIAL

Le x

GHP handed me these some months ago but with no instructions other than to hold them.

May I do the same now to you?

Philippa.

127.

The reason why neg. failed

i) Court is det not to give safe conduct

ii) lack of commitment to putting across the facts.

iii) internal dissension

§ 32

§ 97

§ 109

§ 118

§ 120

1. DHardwick comments?

E.R.

Miss Lane

30 DEC 80

As I told you a Carol Lane, I have spoken without much joy to Mr Kavanagh & to Ch. Supt. We shall get more cooperation from them after trial starting 12 Jan, cc Mr Andrew Miss Lane and hope like we can get [illegible] FCO comments on the [illegible]

Mr Phillips

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF PRINCES GATE

I have discussed with Miss Carol Lane her note of 28 November about the continued lack of co-operation from the Metropolitan Police.

2. I have told her that I am not dispose to accept this obstructive and unduly apprehensive view from the Metropolitan Police; but that on the other hand I appreciate that the events leading up to the action for contempt against Miss Harman of the NCCL may give them some cause for concern.

3. I think I had better speak to Mr Kavanagh or Mr Kelland.

(DAVID HEATON)
1 December 1980

Police Department

(21)

CONFIDENTIAL

cc Mr Andrew
Mr Phillips

Mr Heaton

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF PRINCES GATE: COOPERATION FROM THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

I thought that you would like to know how things stand following your telephone conversation with Mr Kavanagh on 17 November. I saw DAC Powis and Cmdr Duffy on 27 November to discuss their difficulties in letting us have, in advance of t trial and inquest, the material they have gleaned on events inside the Embassy. There is, apparently, a considerable amount of this, of which the statements of the hostages and SAS will obviously be important if the official history is to tell the whole story. However, the police think that Counsel for the Defence an Fleet Street are going to try hard to blacken the SAS and they fear that if the existence of an "official" history became known there might be pressure for it to be produced in court. If that were to happen they would not want it said thatthe police had breached the practice of not disclosing evidence in advance of the trial. If, however, we are prepared to wait until after the trial, they will gi us the lot.

2. The problem with this is that I shall probably not be around to take deliver of it. On the other hand, however unfounded the police fears about disclosure may be, the fact is that those fears exist and I feel that we might jeopardise our future good relations with them if we were to press too hard now. In view o this, it might be as well for me to continue preparing a first draft on the basi of what we know from the COBR log.

MISS C A LANE

F4 Division
28 November 1980

E.R.

cc Mr Andrew
Mr Phillips

Miss Lane

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF PRINCES GATE

We had a word yesterday about the lack of cooperation you are receiving from the Met, and especially from C.13 who are putting up a sub-judice front.

2. I spoke yesterday evening to Mr Kavanagh. I said we were anxious to get written contributions (which I felt sure had been prepared for force purposes), and to complete the history before people's memory faded. He took the point, said it sounded as if his people were being a bit regimental, and promised to sort it out and come back to me. He suggested that a formula would might be for us to give a firm undertaking (which I undertook at once to do) that we would publish nothing until after the trial. He, at least, understands that publication is not the essential purpose of the history.

(DAVID HEATON)
18 November 1980

Police Department

SECRET

(17)

CABINET OFFICE
70 WHITEHALL
LONDON SW1A 2AS

01-233 8403

13 October 1980

U0923

Dear Miss Lane

IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

Further to Hayden Phillips' letter of 15 September to Richard Hastie-Smith, I now enclose four copies of the first tranche of the narrative of the Iranian Embassy siege. This covers the events of the first two days of the siege. The narrative for days 3 and 4 is in type and I will send it over tomorrow. The rest, days 5 and 6, will follow shortly thereafter.

What I have done as you will see is to produce a rather lengthy summary of the COBR log in what I hope is at least a less disjointed form than the original. If there are any points which you would like to discuss, I am at your disposal. Similarly, if there are any documents (such as the 'appendices' which I have not enclosed with the narrative) which you do not have but we might, do let me know; we have kept here the tapes of the conversations in COBR and between COBR and Mr Dellow's headquarters.

Finally, let me wish you good luck with your task.

Yours sincerely

Colin Alexander

C H O'D ALEXANDER

Miss C Lane
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AT

ENC

SECRET

(16)

CONFIDENTIAL

Miss Lane

cc Mr Phillips
Mr Hardwick

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

I attach below the files on the Iranian Embassy siege. You will see from QPE/80 11/5/21 that we have commissioned pieces from Cabinet Office, the Metropolitan Police, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and MoD to be ready for you on 13 October. I have also spoken to the [redacted] who have agreed to provide pieces on [redacted]. These may be more appropriate for specialised and perhaps more highly classified annexes than for the main body of the official history. I attach a list of the contacts and their telephone numbers.

2. As to the form of the official history I see it as consisting of a central chronological core which basically tells the story. Inevitably, as different people and organisations were doing different things at the same time there will be a certain amount of "meanwhile back at the ranch". You should aim to make this core as coherent, cursive and readable as possible and also divide it up in such a way as to enable the reader to find out what happened on a particular day or indeed morning, afternoon or evening of a particular day.

3. In addition to the main story I think the official history should have some specialised annexes on particular subjects. The sort of subjects I have in mind are the -

media	-	their treatment of the siege and relations with them;
ambassadors	-	FCO's detailed notes of all the diplomatic efforts that were made;
equipment	-	a fairly straight forward annex listing the equipment used and how it shaped up. The [redacted]
intelligence		[redacted]
legal framework	-	such things as the legal problems raised by the assault on an embassy, damaging diplomatic buildings, legal aspects of both, cutting the supply of services to the embassy, liability/ compensation, etc.

4. I hope you will not hesitate to consult any of us about any aspect of the official history. Indeed no draft should issue from the Home Office without Mr Phillips' approval. This is simply to avoid the kind of problems which you will see from the file arose rather earlier on in this exercise.

PHILIPPA DREW

F4 Division
19 September 1980

Official history : contacts

Cabinet Office : Callum Alexander
233 8403

MOD : Colin Partridge 218 2237

FCO : Michael Burton 233 5635

MoD : John Dellow 2530 3889

18 SEP 1980 (13)

Miss Drew

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
OF THE METROPOLIS

NEW SCOTLAND YARD
BROADWAY LONDON SW1H 0BG

17 September 1980

Your Ref: QPE/80 11/5/21

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SEIGE

Dear Mr Phillips

I write to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 15 September addressed to the Deputy Commissioner, Mr P B Kavanagh who is on holiday.

He would wish me to inform you that the Metropolitan Police contribution to the official history will be prepared as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

R. Marsh

R Marsh, Superintendent
Staff Officer to Deputy Commissioner

Mr G H Phillips
Assistant Secretary
F4 Division
Home Office
Queen Annes Gate
London SW1H 9AT

STAFF IN CONFIDENCE

10 SEP 1980 (10)

Miss Drew
cc Mr Phillips

Mr Stephens
Estabs 4

MISS CAROL LANE

I would be grateful for your approval to the continued employment of Miss Lane in F4 Division between 6 October (when her successor Mr Webber arrives) and her departure for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which I understand is to be some time in December. What we have in mind is that Miss Lane should write the official history of the siege of the Iranian Embassy in April/May 1980. (This task was originally given to Miss Drew, but it has become clear that the demands of her day to day work preclude the concentrated attention required). Miss Lane was a participant in some of the events of that siege and thus has the background knowledge necessary for writing the official history. The two month period should be sufficient to get at least the major spadework done.

If you agree that we may use Miss Lane's services in this way I hope you will be able to give effect to her promotion from the day she will start on this work, ie 13 October (this allows for a week's handover with Mr Webber). As I said, the work was originally to be done by a Principal, and I think it is of Principal quality.

(DAVID HEATON)
10 September 1980

Police Department

(14)

6207

QPE/80 11/5/21

15 September 1980

C Farthing Esq
DS6
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
LONDON SW1

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

At the end of July you discussed with Philippa Drew the MOD input to the official history, and you agreed to commission from MOD (Army) and the SAS, an account of the MOD part in the siege, including the preparations for the assault. You ventured to suggest that this account might be ready sometime in September.

The purpose of this letter is to ask whether we could receive your contribution at the latest by ~~sometime during the week~~ beginning 6 October. We are anxious that production of the official history should not drag on too long. Memories are short and we are all busy. To this end we are hoping to arrange that Carol Lane (a member of the Home Office team in C@BR) should devote two months solely to this task, relieving Philippa Drew of the responsibility. If this arrangement is agreed, Carol Lane will begin work on 13 October. It would, therefore, be very helpful if we could receive your contribution in the previous week, thus enabling her to get down straightaway to her editing job.

G H PHILLIPS

(13)

6207

QPE/80 11/5/21

15 September 1980

R M Hastie Smith Esq
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
LONDON SW1

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

You wrote on 25 June to Robert Andrew, saying that you might have difficulty in producing the basic narrative of events of the siege by mid-August. The purpose of this letter is to ask whether you could now give enough priority to the production of the narrative so that we could receive it in the week beginning 6 October.

We are anxious that production of the official history should not drag on for too long. Memories are short and we are all busy. To this end we are hoping to arrange that Miss Lane (a member of the Home Office team in COBR) should devote two months solely to this task, relieving Miss Drew of this responsibility. If this arrangement is agreed Miss Lane will begin work on 13 October. If we could receive your contribution in the previous week this would enable Miss Lane to get down to her editing job straightaway.

G H PHILLIPS

6207

QPE/80 11/5/21

15 Septembe:

M St E Burton Esq CVO
MAED
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
LONDON SWI

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

When Philippa Drew saw you on 21 August, I believe you discussed the p
of producing a fairly detailed account of FCO's part in the siege, cov
discussions with Ambassadors, getting posts abroad to lobby in support
purpose of such an account being in part to bring home to readers the
inherent in any involvement with Ambassadors in such delicate circumst

The purpose of this letter is to ask whether you could produce such an
to receive it in the week beginning 6 October. We are anxious that pr
official history should not drag on for too long. Memories are short
all busy. To this end we are hoping to arrange that Carol Lane (a mem
Home Office team in COBR) should devote two months solely to this task
Philippa Drew of this responsibility. If this arrangement is agreed C
will begin work on 13 October. If we could receive your contribution
week, this would enable her to get down straightaway to the editing jo

11

6207

QPE/80 11/5/21

15 September 1980

M St E Burton Esq CVO
MAED
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
LONDON SWI

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

When Philippa Drew saw you on 21 August, I believe you discussed the possibility of producing a fairly detailed account of FCO's part in the siege, covering the discussions with Ambassadors, getting posts abroad to lobby in support etc. The purpose of such an account being in part to bring home to readers the difficulties inherent in any involvement with Ambassadors in such delicate circumstances.

The purpose of this letter is to ask whether you could produce such an account for us to receive it in the week beginning 6 October. We are anxious that production of the official history should not drag on for too long. Memories are short and we are all busy. To this end we are hoping to arrange that Carol Lane (a member of the Home Office team in COBR) should devote two months solely to this task, relieving Philippa Drew of this responsibility. If this arrangement is agreed Carol Lane will begin work on 13 October. If we could receive your contribution in the previous week, this would enable her to get down straightaway to the editing job.

G H PHILLIPS

FROM P B KAVANAGH CBE QPM

28 AUG 1980 (9)

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
OF THE METROPOLIS

NEW SCOTLAND YARD
BROADWAY LONDON SW1H 0BG

Your ref: QPE/80 11/5/21

27 August 1980

Miss Drew
x at least is helpful

David Heaton Esq
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
LONDON SW1H 9AT

Dear David.

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

You wrote to the Commissioner on 7 August and we will, of course, be pleased to co-operate in any way we can.

A criminal trial is pending and whilst sub-judice rules should not affect the compilation of the official history, C13 Branch will naturally be concentrating on evidence for the trial where no doubt a limited narrative account will be used by counsel opening for the prosecution. This account in itself could in due course form part of the history.

As you have no doubt foreseen, there will clearly be some security problems and careful wording will be required to the SAS, and our own special equipment branch.

The Commissioner has already authorised the preparation of a handbook for training and operational purposes covering all aspects of gathering of evidence and use and deployment of technical aids in terrorist and other violent crime incidents. Much of the contents will draw, but not exclusively, on lessons learned at the Embassy siege. This book will probably be our text book for future incidents and the official history, though of great interest will not be essential to it.

X I would be grateful if requests for contributions could be channelled through me.

Yours sincerely
Pat Kavanagh

P B KAVANAGH

(6)

Our Ref: QPE/80 11/5/21

7 August 1980

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

I am writing to ask for the help of the Metropolitan Police in contributing to the official history of the siege, on which work is now beginning to get under way.

We see the official history as a single composite record of what happened, and as drawing together all the strands - police, SAS, FCO, and COBR. We think it might take the form of a composite narrative account, supported by a number of detailed accounts of particular aspects such as, for example, Technical Support and Relations with the Press. But we think the history should be not just a record of events; and that it should be constructed in such a way that it will be of use in the future. For this to be so we need to know what contributors would like to get from it, and we should very much welcome any suggestions you might have about its form and content.

Miss Drew, whom Robert Andrew has asked to be responsible for compiling the official history, has been talking to Departments about contributions, and, as you probably know, has had a preliminary meeting with John Dellow. She - or I, or Robert Andrew when he returns from leave - will be at your disposal if there are points on the form or style or content of the official history which you would like to discuss. In any event we should be very grateful for your support in the provision of the contributions from the many Departments and Branches of the force which were concerned in the siege. Clearly the contributions from the Metropolita Police will be a very large component of the history of this major police operatio

(DAVID HEATON)

Sir David McNee QPM
Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis
New Scotland Yard
Broadway
London SW1H OBG

4. METROPOLITAN POLICE ESTABLISHMENT

The Commissioner referred to the need for obtaining a realistic establishment of the Metropolitan Police. He was concerned that provincial forces were also asking for substantial increases. Mr Andrew assured the Commissioner that the Home Office were keeping a close watch on such requests, which were not all likely to be granted.

5. OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE

This matter was raised by the Commissioner as he had learnt about the proposal to produce an official history only from seeing copies of correspondence between Home Office, the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Defence. Mr Andrew said that the Commissioner should have been brought into consultation earlier; the part played by the Metropolitan Police would of course be brought out fully in the history. Preparation of the material was being co-ordinated by Miss Drew of F4 Division, Home Office; the Cabinet Office were currently editing their log of events, and this would be forwarded in due course to ACA for provision of a contribution on the policing aspects.

6. DENVER SHOE

The Commissioner said that the Department of Transport were considering legislation to authorise use of the "Denver Shoe"; this would be of benefit to police in dealing with parking offences in central London and he sought Home Office support. Mr Andrew said that he would ascertain how matters stood and report back at the next meeting.

RESTRICTED

From: Colin Farthing

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB

Telephone 01-218 2237 (Direct Dialling)
01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

21 JUL

R J Andrew Esq C B
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1H 9AT

Your reference

Our reference
D/DS6/7/59/1/20

Date
27 June 1980

Dear Robert,

IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE - OFFICIAL HISTORY

1. Thank you for sending us a copy of your letter of 23 June to Richard Hartie-Smith. I shall act as the MOD contact.

2. Copies of this letter go to recipients of yours.

Yours,

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

From: R M Hastie-Smith

27 JUN 1980

(3)

CABINET OFFICE
70 WHITEHALL
LONDON SW1A 2AS

01-~~233 5000~~ 233 7280

25 June 1980

T 05179

1. Mr Hastie
2. Mr Phillips

27/6

R J Andrew Esq CB
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AT

Dear Robert,

IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE - OFFICIAL HISTORY 233 8407

Thank you for your letter dated 23 July. I generally agree with the proposals set out in your letter and I have set work in hand accordingly. Callum Alexander will be the man here who will be responsible for producing the basic narrative. My only qualification to your proposals concerns timescale. The next six weeks will be a particularly busy time here and we are not fully staffed at the present moment. For this reason I am afraid that while we will do our best, I cannot promise that we shall circulate the basic narrative before the middle of August.

I am copying this letter to the Commissioner of Police, Tony Stephens in the MOD and Gill Brown in the FCO.

Yours ever

R.M.

431

RESTRICTED

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

R J Andrew Esq CB
Home Office
Queen Anne's Gate
LONDON SW1H 9AT

24 June 1980

Dear Robin,

IRANIAN EMBASSY SIEGE - OFFICIAL HISTORY

1. Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter to Richard Hastie-Smith of 23 June. We would welcome the arrangements you propose. David Beaumont in MAED (233-8835) will stand ready to help in the writing of the history. It would be very useful if the draft of the basic narrative could reach us by the third week in July because of impending staff changes and absences on holiday. We have done some preliminary work on the history of the diplomatic exchanges but will await a sight of the basic narrative before adding our contribution.

2. I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours sincerely,

G G Brown

RESTRICTED